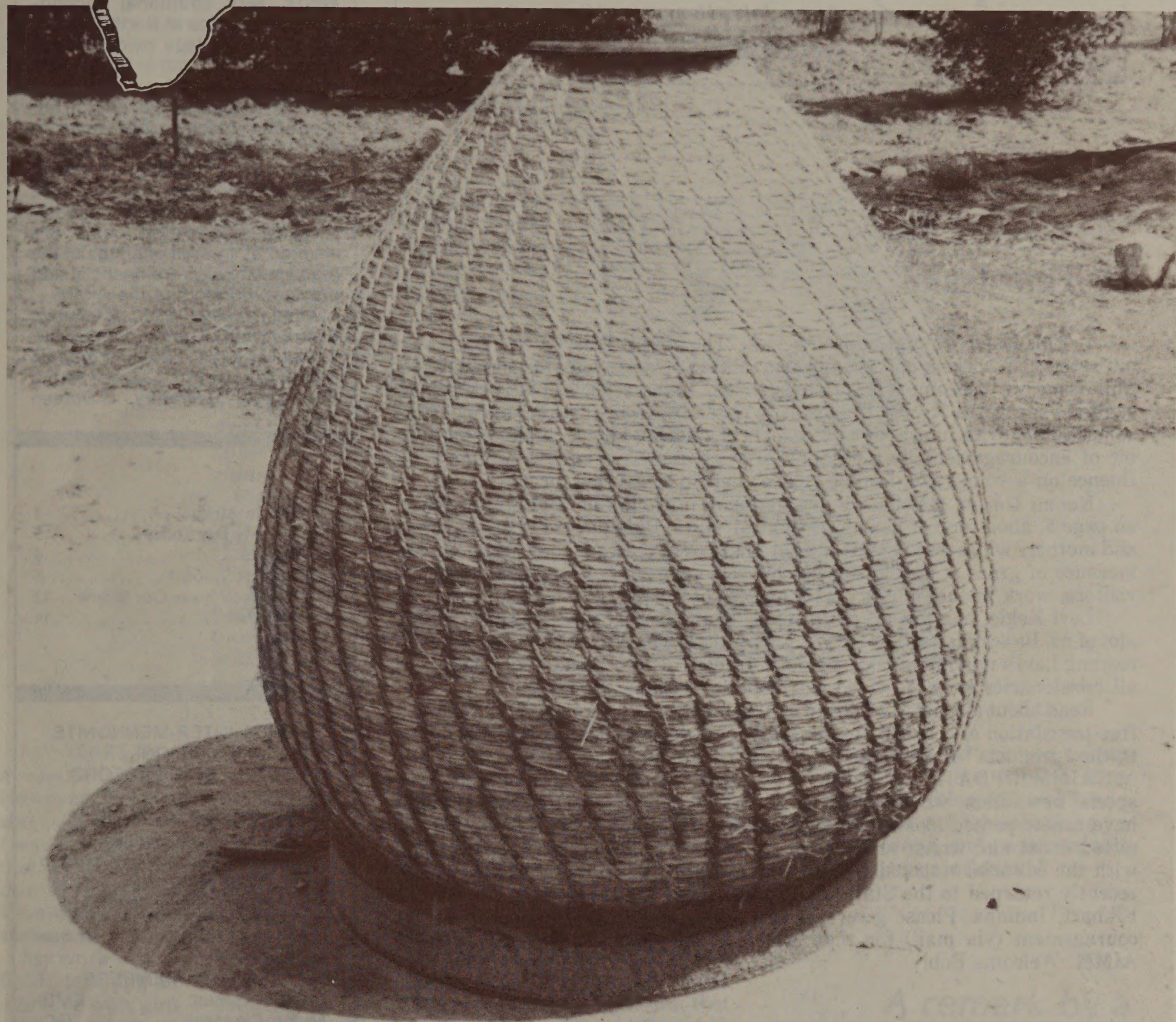


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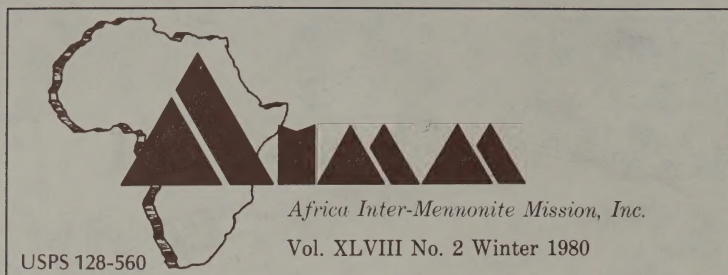
MESSENGER



Christian Mission - Not a Law but a Privilege

Dr. David Bosch

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR the sake of the world, not the world for the sake of the Church. The Bible begins with the story of creation, not with that of the elect people of Israel as prefiguration of the Church; it ends with the city of God which will be without a temple.²⁰ (cont. on p. 16)



Editor James Bertsche
Associate Editor Sue Barkman

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Administrative Staff: **Executive Secretary,** James Bertsche; **Treasurer,** Art Janz; **Women's Auxiliary,** Martini Janz, Jenny Bertsche; **Secretary,** Doreen Ratzlaff.

In This Issue . . .

In This Issue, we continue our series, "The Way It Was." A look back with our retired co-workers on their mission in Africa, is being featured each issue. This issue we welcome Frieda Guengerich. I was especially struck by the sentence she wrote, "... A remark by a missionary about seeing me in Africa someday made an impression on me." It is amazing how a chance remark or bit of encouragement by an older Christian can have such a profound influence on a young life, leading him or her on to service for the Lord.

Naomi Unrau, missionary wife, serving in Gaborone, Botswana writes, on page 5, about one of her more "typical" days. Please remember the wives and mothers who serve alongside their husbands overseas. They need an extra measure of grace at times when trying to cope with family, small children, visitors, work in the ministry and still put it all together as a person.

Levi Keidel has related an incident, which would have literally floored, alot of us. Be sure to read, "Me Interpret Visions?" on page 8. Once again, after reading Levi's narrative, mark on your prayer calendar - the need to pray for all missionaries to be provided extra-special wisdom at times.

Read about a beautiful Zairian girl, Sembeka Kipoko, on page 12. This is a free-translation of a questionnaire sent to her parents, asking their reactions to the "products" of the Lycee Miodi Girls' School in Zaire.

AIMM UPDATE has a few news items of interest to everyone. One special news item, which appeared in last issue, is that after this, you will have a new person looking after the AIMM MESSENGER. Bob Gerhart, a gifted artist and writer and former missionary in Lesotho will be working with the editorial responsibilities from now on. He and his wife, Joyce have recently returned to the States from Africa and are currently settling in at Elkhart, Indiana. Please give Bob and Joyce your prayer support and encouragement (via mail) for their work in the publications department at AIMM. Welcome Bob!

My Years in Africa	3
That Was My Day Today	5
Lesotho Trek	6
Me Interpret Visions?	8
She Has Taken Away Our Shame ...	12
AIMM Update	14

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ABOUT THE COVER . . .

We have done something a little different on the cover this issue. The editorial by Dr. David Bosch has been started on the front cover. The message in this short piece is so important - well, we just felt you should have it all handy on the cover pages, to read in its entirety, rather than having to leaf through the magazine to finish it.

The "basket" on the cover is actually a Lesotho-brand of granary, sewn out of mountain grass . . . used for bringing in the harvest.

— SFB

THE WAY IT WAS

My Years in Africa

Frieda Guengerich

Frieda Guengerich was born on May 29, 1913 at Deer Creek, Illinois. A member of the Calvary Mennonite Church in Washington, Illinois, she began her missionary career at Charlesville Station, Zaire in 1946. Frieda's missionary service was interrupted after the death of her mother in 1960 when she gave eight loving years of care for her father who was not able to live alone.

Currently Frieda lives in Glendale, Arizona near her brother Lester. She helps with the editing of Tshiluba literature manuscripts for Zaire from time to time. She has a Bible teaching ministry to those who live around her and remains active in the local Mennonite Church.



MY YEARS IN AFRICA covered a span from 1946 to 1974. However, twice my term was cut short. In 1960 my mother died and I was at home for eight years after that. I did not finish my last term due to ill health. I worked at the Charlesville, Nyanga and Kalonda stations.

My work was in the educational field: teaching Bible classes and working with girls in the primary school, teaching in classes to prepare young men for High School, supervising primary school teachers, working with the women in the Bible Institute and one year as director for the Girls' School at Nyanga.

Many factors led to my decision to be a missionary. At an early age a remark by a missionary about seeing me in Africa some day

made an impression on me. Contact with missionaries at our Young People's Retreats and reports by them in *The Congo Messenger* created an interest and presented a challenge to me. However, it took many years before I was finally sure that God wanted me personally to go. It was the message of John 4:35 that convinced me I could no longer delay, for there was a harvest that was white and waiting for laborers.

Learning the Tshiluba language was one of my difficult experiences. It was rather easy to try to say what I wanted, but so hard to hear and understand the Africans. There came a time when I seemed to forget everything I had learned; the heavens were like brass and the precious

promises of God seemed empty. But God was there with me. After a time everything fell into place. Further study of Tshiluba was a joy and challenge, and I was later able to do some translating.

"... A remark by a missionary about seeing me in Africa someday made an impression on me."

EACH TERM I WAS assigned to a different kind of school which usually involved a move to another station and required new adjustments. I was thrust into places of responsibility and sometimes asked to do tasks that I felt unqualified for. But I have been glad for these experiences for they were all a part of God's program of training for me. His hand was on my shoulder urging me on in the midst of frustrations.

One time especially I was at wits' end and asked, "What is God saying to me?" That morning as the sun was rising, I sat looking out my window. The light shone through the leaves of the palm trees and, behold, a cross with rays of red light streaming out from it on all sides. As the sun rose higher, it appeared again - this time in sparkling white light. Then I knew that God was saying, "I am here. Keep pressing on."

"His hand was on my shoulder, urging me on in the midst of frustrations."

MY CONTACTS IN the villages have been special. I shall always be grateful that Aggie Friesen, in those early days, took me for evening walks to the village and introduced me to the people in their homes. Through the years I found great joy in visiting in the villages and sharing the Word of God. I usually carried a small flannelboard with which to teach the children. Often there were many things to prevent my going, but when I did go I was refreshed. I shall never forget the five weeks spent with Tina Quiring and Kamba Jean teaching VBS in the Charlesville villages.

Once I was asked to be a counselor for the women of the entire mission while Ina Locke was on furlough. This was another new experience for me. I encouraged them to have district conferences. The Kalonda women had never had one, but they entered into it so wholeheartedly and received such a blessing from

it that it gave me great joy and new courage. Working with the women of the Bible Institute was also one of my most rewarding assignments.

AS I LOOK BACK over the years I count it a joy to have been chosen by God to serve Him in Africa, but I realize as Jesus said, "We are unworthy servants, we have only done our duty" - and it was often done so imperfectly. I have been blessed by the friendship and love of my African brothers and sisters and rejoice when I see them going on in the Lord's service. I am glad to have had a small part in the training of some of them.

Since retirement I am happy to do what I can in the local church. The Lord is teaching me many new things out of His Word and gives me opportunity to share them through Bible classes. I keep an ear open for news from the field and am glad for more time to spend in prayer. I also have the opportunity to visit and share with shut-ins and lonely folks around me.



Frieda headed for the village via bicycle to teach Bible lessons, in earlier days of missionary service.



Frieda with TEMUA Jeanne, who was the first Zairian girl to become a teacher in our work and

is currently the President of the Mennonite Women's group in Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire.

That was My Day Today

Naomi Unrau

WELL, IT'S BEEN quite a day. It's not been the usual sort and yet any day could include most of what happened. Hopefully I'll not have another one soon just like it.

I slept a little longer this morning, thanks to Henry who got up at 6:00 with the girls, gave them breakfast and took Beth, the four year old, to nursery school. Rebekah, 18 months, is part of the routine too . . . she must go along for the ride. As I got up at 7:30 I anticipated the things I must do before Carol came to babysit at 9:00. I hadn't gone to sewing class yesterday because of a bad cold but would go today to help three girls finish their projects before the Christmas break on Friday. I knew it could be stressful; two of the girls had lost their patterns and expected us to know how to sew the dresses. These were their first sewing attempts; their English was poor and my Setswana was poorer. I really didn't feel well but I'd manage until 11:00. When I left the class, one dress was finished, another almost done and a blouse only needed a facing sewn on which isn't hard unless it's your first attempt at facings and the handle of the hand-operated sewing machine keeps dropping off.

AFTER I HAD RESTED, the neighbour lady's sister came to the door distressed. That morning Kaalaretse had given birth to her third child, her first son. He had been strangled by the cord. We had looked forward to each other's newborns, mine due in March. Since our car was in the garage, I quickly took the bicycle and rode to the hospital, ten minutes away, wondering what I would say to her. Psalm 23 comforted me as I rode: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil". Would she accept that also? As we cried, talked and prayed I knew that she feared no evil. "If God wanted to take him, there is nothing I could do. I still have my two girls." She also remembered her friends who had had worse tragedies than she and she counted herself blessed. I came home comforted.


HENRY HAD RADIO programming to do tonight and I prepared a quick supper so he could be away by 5:00.

Storm clouds had been building up quickly in the west and soon it was pouring rain. As I began to clear away supper I looked up and saw a small black man outside my window trying to shelter himself from the rain with his coat. Without hesitation I led him into the living room where the remains of supper still stood. His English was poor but he rattled on and on about being the former gardener of this place and how he had been the good friend of the former missionary who had lived here. Soon the problem came out; his small son, while playing with matches, had burned down his house destroying, among other things, his all-important resident's permit. He had had 48 hours granted him by the police to secure money enough to pay for another one or be sent back to Malawi. Tomorrow morning at 7:00 was the deadline. Could I lend him Pula 12.50? He would repay me on the 21st of the month. If only Henry were home! Luckily our colleague John Kliewer was home next door. Yes, he had heard of this John; he had taken his "good missionary friend" to court for a triviality. After some firm words with the former gardener, he placed the money on the table for him.

When does a Christian withhold help from one in need, whoever he is, and when does he not? And what is REALLY helping someone? These are questions we've struggled with time after time. The man left.

Today seemed like a dream . . . and partly a nightmare. It was already 5:30. I had only one hour to get the house straightened up and the girls bathed. At 6:45 Ruth Kliewer and I were going to a Christmas program to see the children of a neighbour perform. The parents of these children live a three hour drive away and have bravely left three almost-grown daughters to finish the school year here in town. We knew the mother would appreciate it if we went. The program was lovely. The children sang of a little baby whose life changed the world, who is wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Yes, the Prince of peace.

In the struggle of living, He makes all the difference.



Lesotho Trek

We crossed passes with names like
"God Help Me Pass"

Joyce Gerhart

"LOOK MOM, NO GUARD RAILS!" "How far is it to the bottom? Sure hope we don't meet anyone on this narrow road!" Such was the conversation for most of the trip into the interior of Lesotho. The rest of the time we were either too frightened or too thankful to talk very much.

When our family had been invited to join Peter and Gloria and their two sons on this expedition across Lesotho we thought it would be great fun, an adventure, a vacation, and an education. It was - all four! Peter is a German-Swiss whose job as meteorologist takes him to the far corners of Lesotho. When he planned this trip for the second time and invited us to accompany him and his family, we couldn't resist! Our goal was a nice five or six days of rest at Sehlabathebe National Park on Lesotho's eastern edge, high in the mountains on the crest of the Drakensbergs.

IN THE PLANNING, two other couples decided they would fly up and join us. Then the lodge would be booked for our entire party. Menus were planned, food bought and divided up, perishables to go by plane, the rest with us in the Land Rover (including seven dozen eggs).

From Maseru, in the "lowlands" at 5100 feet we set out on a lovely cool summer morning. Lesotho has the most unexpected scenery and of course, no super highways! Two of the children rode in half of the back of the Land Rover, the other half was piled high with gear and food. Everything was tied in place to keep it from falling, even the eggs. Outside on top was emergency camping gear. Bob and I rode in the other half of the back seat, opposite the pile, in hopes of balancing the load.

THE ROAD WINDS its way upward, and downward across

Lesotho, gradually narrowing and worsening! We crossed passes with names like "God Help Me Pass" and "Blue Mountain Pass". And yet, as we went higher there were still villages with their huts, fields, and flocks. Along the steep slopes women were working in fields, fields which one could literally "fall out of". The ruggedness of these mountains as well as their barrenness is almost unbelievable, and yet people live on them.

Our first night out we spent with friends who were on assignment with CIDA at their Thaba Tseka project. They get down to Maseru about once every four weeks, always by plane.

AFTER OUR FIRST DAY we met only one other vehicle until we got to the park itself. Much of the road is little better than a track. After crossing the big Orange River at Komo Komo Bridge, 1,000

"Along the steep slopes, women were working in fields, which one could literally fall out of!"

miles from the Atlantic Ocean into which it flows, we continued crawling up and down. Still there were villages and herdboys, although we felt we'd long since left "civilization". The sandy track was generally just wide enough for the wheel base of the Land Rover and was very treacherous. Washouts abounded, some so deep that as we pulled up and out the spare tire on the rear door caught on the ground and bent the door. The men would get out, with combined effort push it back into position and on we'd go. Another washout was so narrow, just above the river, that we crossed on three wheels! Next the road had washed away altogether and we inched our way up the nearly dry, rocky river bed for about a mile and a half, though it seemed like a hundred.

At long last Peter pointed out, high up, the last pass we would have to cross before descending

"We gained new respect for evangelists, lay preachers, teachers, doctors and nurses who still visit these remote areas regularly, largely dependent upon horses or aircraft for transportation."

to the park. At last we were at the bottom of the ridge, the pass above being under clouds now. We slowly, slowly ascended, up and around eighteen switchbacks. There had been some road work going on, but still it was rough and full of washouts. Finally, the top and a white wall of fog! As we stopped we saw it lifting. We were going down now and in a short while we were under it. Here were nice green valleys, small streams and more villages, herd-boys and flocks. Finally we were at the park gates, in a drizzling rain, and still at least another 45

minutes to go before the Lodge. Half way there we stopped at the Park Headquarters where we checked in and found that the plane had not been able to get in that day. So our friends would not be waiting for us. Neither this mountain airport nor the Maseru one are equipped for instrument landings. At long last we reached the Lodge, tired and sore. Bob and Peter "off-loaded" all the goods in the rain. Would you believe it, not a single egg cracked or broken!

THERE FOLLOWED FIVE days of rain and intermittent low-clouds (fog!) and "high clouds". We'd go for walks only to have clouds drop and we'd feel lost, then we'd wait a bit and they'd lift and we'd find our way home again! It wasn't the way we'd planned to spend this holiday! Providentially we'd included games, puzzles, books and toys. We found ourselves with

time to read, write letters, meditate, sleep and knit. As the other two families never did arrive, we improvised menus out of the things we'd brought. We baked bread every day and had an occasional trout from the pond at the doorstep. We had always wanted a vacation where we could stay put and rest, and we got it!

The day before we were to leave we got up to glorious sunshine. Now we could see those majestic peaks which we had been glimpsing all week. And we could take one walk without get-

ting soaked. But by lunch more rain, and the day following we left in rain and drove in it most of the day. Roads were slippery, now, as well as narrow. We travelled southward, crossing into the Transkei to avoid what Peter called "even worse" roads. We entered Lesotho again at Qachas Nek. From here we drove to Sekake's over a newly graded, red clay, very slippery road. Here we nearly rolled over as the Land Rover slid into a ditch, but as we were supported by a bank on the inside we gradually eased forward and it righted itself again. There was a long silence and then prayers of thanks.

After Sekake's there was one more river to ford and then onward to Maseru. Eight days after setting out we arrived back home. We had travelled about 560 miles, crossing some of the most rugged mountain areas as well as lovely green valleys. As late as 1971, a four wheel drive vehicle had not yet crossed Lesotho!

THROUGHOUT THE whole trip we were reminded of early missionaries who so often had made these sorts of trips entirely on horseback. Evidence of their diligence are the various missions, clinics, schools and chapels which are now to be found all across Lesotho. We gained a new respect for evangelists, lay preachers, teachers, doctors and nurses who still visit these remote areas regularly large dependent upon horses or aircraft for transportation.

Would we do it again? Yes, but preferably by plane!



"Three men from Malanga have come to see you," she said.

Me Interpret Visions?

Levi Keidel

ON AUGUST 4 I was secluded in the bedroom of a vacant residence on the station preparing four messages and a report for upcoming church conferences. The morning had passed swiftly. I was studying the subject of "Growth." In Acts 10 Cornelius the Roman centurion had a vision. He was instructed to send a delegation to call for Peter. The apostle, a traditional Jew, must have felt threatened in answering that call. But at the urging of the Lord, Peter took the risk and went. How he grew! And how important was his obedience to the history of the Church! It was noon and I went home for lunch.

Eudene met me at the door. "Three men from Malanga have come to see you," she said.

MALANGA IS A VILLAGE 25 miles distant. In recent years Christians there have reported extraordinary spiritual manifestations. Leaders of our Mennonite Church at large have been divided on the matter. Traditionalists say, "Those Malanga people are worshipping other gods." Innovationists say, "This could be the harbinger of revival we need." I was a member of the commission sent there recently to witness first-hand what is going on.

We found a people whose total lives center around their faith. Elder Nyamakoyi is their shepherd. They exalt Jesus Christ. They have zeal, joy and a hunger for righteous living. They ingeniously weave cultural tradition into their forms of worship. For example, all women wear home-made narrow-brimmed straw hats as head coverings. However, their prayer meetings are noisier than anything I have hitherto experienced.

The Malanga delegation returned at 12:45. "Elder Nyamakoyi has been fasting these days," the spokesman said. "Last evening after we had the final lesson of daily vacation Bible school on the filling of the Holy Spirit, he called me to his house. We found him in his bedroom. He had collapsed onto the floor; he was breathing heavily; he had had a vision. He kept saying, 'Go get Levi.' So we walked all night to come get you."

THERE WAS NO WAY I could go.

"Our Church community has an organized structure to deal with needs which arise in village churches," I responded. "Did you inform Elder Nyimi who is responsible for your area?"

"No. We passed his house late at night."

"Did you tell Pastor Djari who is in charge of your district?"

"Preacher, if God had told Nyamakoyi to call Pastor Djari, we would have called him. But God told us to come get you."

I paused to frame another argument. "But God has also given me the work of preparing important messages these few days. Now you say He wants me to go to Malanga. I haven't received any such word from Him."

"Jesus told the elder to call you. That finishes it."

I was speechless. How was I to cope with the matter? "I need time to arrange my thinking," I stalled. "Come back for my answer at 2 o'clock."

After they left I went to visit old Pastor Ngongo. He had years of experience working with these people. I told him what had happened and asked his counsel.

"You should pray for God to make a way for you to go," he said.

"What if I don't go?"

"Then they will hunt someone else to interpret the vision for them."

ME INTERPRET A VISION? What was I getting into? But the pastor's feelings were clear. My failure to go would destroy their

"He had had a vision. He kept saying, 'Go Get Levi' . . ."

confidence in us and provoke a church split.

I returned home. "You'd better go," Eudene said. "It's not a life and death matter that you arrive immediately. Get a good night's sleep, and leave early tomorrow."

I could go by motorcycle or I could fly to an airstrip nearby where Pastor Djari lives and we could travel the remaining four miles to Malanga on his motorcycle. I went to see our MAF pilot.

"I have a flight scheduled that direction in the morning. I could drop you off there," he said. "How would I get home?" "That strip is only seven minutes from here; I could come get you in the late afternoon."

The delegation returned at 2:20. "You can start home," I told the men. "I'll come tomorrow morning by plane." They left rejoicing.

I felt extremely uneasy about what lay ahead. Under an emotionally-charged environment might I succumb to some strange power beyond my control? I felt like the Spirit was driving me into the wilderness. But I also recalled that the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet. (I Cor. 14:32) I did not relish my role; but by these thoughts, Jesus assured me that He would shield me from any influences beyond my control.

NEXT MORNING THE pilot and I took off in the Cessna at 9:30 a.m. Shortly after we touched down on the bush strip. Mark told me, "I'll be back to get you at 5 o'clock," and took off.

Reverend Djari and Elder Nyimi were waiting at the strip. We walked to Djari's house, put chairs under a shade tree and I recounted the story. "I don't know what time the delegation will pass here," I said. I assumed that surely they would have slept a few hours before beginning their foot trip home.

"Oh they passed here about

10 o'clock last night; they told us you were coming." They had gone at least 36 hours without sleep to carry out their mission.

Elder Nyimi is close kin to the Malanga people. "Have you experienced anything in your own life which sheds light on Nyamakoyi's situation?" I asked him?

"No. But I had a dream Tuesday night. We were to baptize at the village of Kidiata today. In my dream Nyamakoyi was standing before a crowd preaching when he began trembling all over and collapsed onto the ground. Then a voice told me, 'Nyamakoyi will not go with you to Kidiata.' The next day we received his letter saying hard things had caught him; his body did not have strength to come."

IT WAS TIME TO GO. Nyimi started toward Malanga on foot. Djari and I went on his Honda 90. He stopped in front of Elder Nyamakoyi's house. Through the window I saw the quaint straw hats on rows of women's heads. Above the motor noise I heard their singing. A lay leader named Jadot came out to greet us.

"Nyamakoyi is on his bed," he said. "Already having fasted for several days, he is too weak to come greet you. We are all here waiting for you."

"I compare this with what happened in Acts 10," I replied. "As Peter did, I've come with some friends to answer your call."

We went inside. The living and dining rooms, connected by a 5-foot wall opening, were packed with about 50 seated people, two-thirds of them women. They were singing with a din that injured the eardrums. Upon seeing us, they simultaneously held up little slips of paper with handwritten words of welcome, and waved them in rhythm with their singing. They had woven Bible stories and Scripture verses into traditional melodies. Their faces reflected

solicitude and joy. We sat down to await the arrival of Nyimi. At the end of ten minutes of unbroken noise, Djari left on the cycle to bring him. How long had they been singing? We could never converse with Nyamakoyi against a background of such noise. After another ten minutes Djari and Nyimi arrived and Jadot raised his hand to stop the singing.

"We're going in to talk with Nyamakoyi now," I announced. "But first I'll pray with you. Then I want you all to quietly leave and go regather in the church. There you can sing and pray for us. Afterwards we will bring you a report."

I took my Bible and a clip pad with blank paper. Jadot led us down a corridor and into a small darkish room. Nyamakoyi was lying on his back on a low pillow-less split-bamboo bed, his eyes closed, his mouth open.

"We have arrived," I said.

A seizure of heaving caught him. Then he shook his head vigorously as if to clear his mind. About seven men had crowded in behind me; his wife stood to my right at the foot of the bed; my two friends stood to my left.

"Would you like for these men to leave before you start talking or can they stay," I asked?

"They can stay."

I asked his wife to open a window shutter to let in light and ventilation. I called for three chairs. We sat down at his bedside. "Now you can begin telling us your story."

HE RECALLED HIS words to me during a previous visit: God had revealed to him that something extraordinary would happen to him in the eighth month. Then he related a series of visions he'd had during which something came upon him; his body was deprived of its power and he collapsed as if dead except for hearing and speaking. He was told that things were leaving from across the great water beginning their journey to come to him. These things were blankets, medicines, knives and large carrying

"My failure to go would destroy their confidence in us and provoke a church split."

basins. Each succeeding vision informed him that these things had arrived at a point closer to him. Finally he was informed that they had arrived at Gungu (150 miles distant) and would reach him at noon the following day.

"Next day at noon I was sitting here on my bed patching my trousers," he continued. "Nothing happened; 12:30 arrived . . . nothing. Then about 12:55 . . . Aaayyiiiii . . . that something came over me. I collapsed again. Then a voice said, 'I am Jesus. Up to now I haven't been inside of you. But I'm entering into you now. The things have arrived. I'm calling you to work for me!' The voice stopped. I woke up. What was the explanation of this? That afternoon we had our last Bible school lesson. I poured water from a bottle into a glass until it ran over like the lesson said. This was to show how we are to be filled with the Spirit. I went home and into my bedroom, my heart still troubled about these visions. Then it happened again. I fell and became like dead. A loud voice said, 'Where is Levi?' I replied, 'I don't know where he is.' 'Call him,' it said. 'But I have no one to send.' 'Send Kombo John. He'll go.'

I called Kombo and told him what had happened. He went to get you. Now you have come to bring us the message the Lord has given you."

BY NOW PEOPLE were also packed outside the open window listening. All stood in breathless silence awaiting my response. They saw me as their personal envoy sent from Al-

"I felt like the Spirit was driving me into the wilderness."

mighty God. I was spinning the printing press in my head like mad but it was only turning out blank paper. If the Lord had brought me into this situation, would He not now give me some

kind of word? Tension was climbing. Finally I spoke.

"I have heard your words. Now I need some time alone with my two friends to meditate. We'll be back soon."

Djari, Nyimi and I left and went into a huddle in the corner of the vacant dining room. "Do either of you have a hunch on what that vision means?" "No," they shook their heads.

"Medicine heals," I mused aloud. "Blankets comfort. A knife could be the Word of God . . . but knives . . .?"

That's right!" Djari exclaimed. "That is the way the Word of God works; it pierces us like knives."

"Carrying basins," I said. "They carry burdens. Is it that the burden of Jesus' work of healing, comforting and convicting has entered into him?" It sounded pretty far-fetched.

"Maybe that's it," they declared. "Let's go try it!"

"Elder, you said that Jesus called you and these things went inside of you. The two matters teach the same thing. Basins are for carrying burdens. The burden of the Lord's work has entered into you. Your words will heal people, like medicine. They will bring people comfort, like blankets. They will pierce people's hearts like knives to convict them of their sins. You received these things to show you the kind of work you'll be doing for Jesus." People in the room stirred but listened intently.

"There are other things you need if you are to measure up to the work He is calling you to do," I continued, gripping his hand. "First, in the name of Jesus Christ, sit up." He almost popped up and sat there blinking his eyes.

"Put your feet onto the floor." He obeyed.

"VISIONS HAVE THEIR purpose," I said. "Fasting has its purpose. They are like medicine. If a doctor gives a mother 10 pills ordering her to give her child one pill a day, the medicine heals. But if she decides

"Visions have their purpose," I said.

to give them all to the child at once, she can kill her child. For years you have been searching for the Holy Spirit. Now Jesus Himself has told you that He has entered into you. What else do you need to search for? Your visions are now adequate. Don't hunt for any more. Now you need to take care of your body so it will last a long time to do the work Jesus has for you to do. So I declare to you that your fasting is finished. While on earth Jesus spoke and stilled a storm. Jesus is telling the storm inside of you to be quiet now. His Spirit is over you to give you peace. Your work now is to sit quietly and study the Word so as to guide your people. Do you understand?"

"Yes," he nodded.

"Has the purpose for which you called me been fulfilled?"

"Yes," he affirmed. Inwardly I heaved a sigh of relief.

"Good. Now we are going to pray for you. Then you will go with us to church and we will report to the people."

Djari took his other hand and led in prayer. Everybody was quiet and reverent. The prayer ended and people were suddenly jubilant. Hands thrust toward us from every direction. Nyamakoyi's wife looked like she wanted to hug me. We went to join those waiting in church. I



Group of Baptismal candidates from the Malanga Church pictured in 1979.

meal. We all ate heartily. Then we filed out through a corridor of people shaking our hands in farewell. Djari and I mounted the cycle and returned to his village.

At 5 p.m. the plane arrived. I rode home with joy that wiped out my fatigue. I guess like Peter I was growing. And perhaps my obedience would some day prove important to the history

"Perhaps my obedience would someday prove important to the history of this church."

gave a report and spoke briefly about making sure our use of the Spirit's gifts enhance our witness to the Gospel.

WE WERE WALKING BACK to the elder's house when he said to me: "You know, when you're fasting, you don't feel hunger. But when the fast is finished, you are ready to eat."

Djari and I were on the point of mounting the Honda to leave when we were shown into Nyamakoyi's house. His wife had spread the table with a full

of this church. Still, my elation was tinged with uncertainty. What would the next scene of the Malanga drama require of me?

Read What Parents Think about the Lycee Miodi Girls' School

“She Has Taken Away Our Shame”

*“She has made us proud of her”, would be the meaning of this phrase.



Sembeka Kipoko with her mother and father. Her mother is an agriculture worker and her father is a Bible translator.

(A brief questionnaire was sent to Kipoko David, father of 6th year student Sembeka Kipoko, pictured here. The following is a free translation of his answers.)

You the parents of Sembeka, how do you feel about her work at the Lycee?

“Her work surpasses to cause us joy. We pray the Lord to increase the number of such girls among us so they can open our eyes and our minds so that the region of the Apende may be well known among the other tribes who surround us.”

What help has the school been to Sembeka?

“It is in this school that girls like her have had their thoughts lifted to un-

derstand that they, as young women, are important and are about to be recognized in a new way. The school has helped Sembeka to develop in skills and personal growth.”

What help has this school been in your own home?

“This school has already helped us much in the form of clothing that has been sewn for all of us in the home. The school has also helped us in our home through the correction and discipline it has brought to us.”

In what ways has her knowledge of sewing, cooking and home making helped your family?

“Her studies have already helped us in many ways: in the clothing she sews

for us; the new food she prepares; the way she cleans the house and the cooking utensils. Yes, she is a continual good help to us."

Is she helpful to your other children?

"Yes, she helps our other children in the way she corrects them, cooks and prepares food, sews for them and helps take care of our home."

Do you think she will be able to earn a living for herself in the days ahead?

"Yes, she will be able to help herself now through her knowledge of sewing, cooking and home making."



Sembeka instructing sewing class using the treadle sewing machines at Lycee Miodi Girls School.

Are you happy for the Girl's School and should it continue?

"Yes, we have joy in our home because of the big help she is to all of us, for she has taken away our shame* as people enter our home. We want to see more and more students in that school. Many thanks to the missionaries who thought of such a school and to the women in America who sent the necessary things to start such a school in our land. I give you much thanks for your help to us in the love of our Lord Jesus and in our friendship in the Holy Spirit."



Sembeka in Lycee Miodi Sewing Room. First year students are cutting out cloth which is unbelievably difficult for beginners. Sembeka instructs and encourages them along.



Sembeka working on school assignment in front of her home. Her mother, left, is pounding flour; her father, Kipoko David reading his Gipende Bible.

AIMM Update

Zaire church president to study in the States



IN THE PAST ISSUE of the Messenger our readers were introduced to **Reverend Mbonza Kikunga**, the newly elected president of the

Zaire Mennonite Church. At the invitation of the AIMM Board, **Rev. Mbonza** is coming to Brattleboro, Vermont to take a special 10 week course designed especially for students for whom English is not a first language. The course is scheduled to run from March 25 to June 2. The Brattleboro course makes large use of a well equipped laboratory and many audio visual materials in its focus upon a conversational approach to English study.

While our Zairian Church leaders often speak several languages, English is usually not one of them since their country is part of French-speaking Africa. This becomes a frustrating

hinderance for those who are elected to administrative roles in the church and are expected to represent their church in settings where English is the spoken and written language. Rev. Mbonza already has a good reading knowledge of English. We are confident that the ten week course he is taking will make a significant contribution to his grasp of the language.

It is also planned that at the conclusion of his study his wife, **Dimuka Mazemba** will join him here in the States for a fraternal visit during the month of June. An itinerary will be worked out which will take them through some of our constituent AIMM communities.

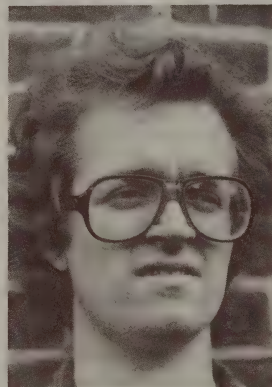
Chuck Fennig Leaves for VS Assignment

IT WAS IN FALL of 1980 that the Commission on Overseas Missions of the General Conference announced the organization of a voluntary service program under its auspices. The first response to this new opportunity for overseas service was in the person of **Chuck Fennig**. From Berne, Indiana, Chuck is the son of missionary parents. Serving under the Africa Inland Mission in Kenya as teachers, they sent their children to the well-known Rift Valley Academy of that country for their education. Upon graduation, Chuck came to Indiana to enroll at Taylor University where he majored in French. Since graduation he has worked out his teaching credentials at Indiana University.

ty, has taken intensive summer courses in conversational French at Middlebury College in Vermont and has served one summer with a youth team in France under the Greater Europe Mission.

Chuck's two year assignment has taken him to Kinshasa, Zaire where he will be helping Earl and Ruth Roth in many of the details of buying, packing, shipping, travel coordination and business calls in government offices. At some point during his term he will also visit our church area upcountry with a particular view to learning what is being done in the areas of christian education and the production of christian literature.

A commissioning service was held at the First



Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana on March 8. He left the States the following Saturday, March 14.

We welcome Chuck to our AIMM team in Zaire and pray for him a rich and rewarding two years of service.

THE LAST ISSUE of the AIMM Messenger featured an article by **Vernon Sprunger**, a longtime missionary of the AIMM who since his retirement from active field service in 1972 had served on staff of the First Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana as minister of visitation for the elderly. As that issue of the Messenger found its way into the mailboxes of our supporting friends across the country, Vernon lay in his last illness at the Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Death came on December 27, 1980 and another of our pioneers passed to his reward.

1931 was a historic year in his life for it was in that year that he completed credits for his college degree, resigned from his position as a foreman with the Goodrich Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio, married Lilly Bachman of Polaski, Iowa and left with her for a first term of service in Zaire which then was known as the Belgian Congo. Having set his face toward Africa, Vernon never looked back or turned back from missionary career which was to span 41 years.

IN THE COURSE of his years as a missionary Ver-



**Vernon J. Sprunger
Passes**

non served in a wide range of leadership roles which included those of teacher, church planter, field treasurer, field legal representative, school inspector and an interim term of several months as the executive secretary of the Congo Protestant Council. Vernon also served in the Elkhart office for three years as executive secretary of the Mission during which time his wife Lilly died of cancer. He later married fellow missionary Irena Liechty of Berne, Indiana who was his gifted companion dur-

ing his remaining years of service in Zaire and in the homeland.

For those who had the privilege of working with and knowing Vernon as a fellow missionary, he will always be remembered as a man of tireless energy which was linked with a deep commitment to christian mission. To know Vernon was also to discover his quick sense of humor which enabled him not only to see the lighter side of daily routine but also to laugh heartily at himself. His coworkers also found in him a man of vision who

was always probing new ideas, new possibilities, new strategies, new programs and new areas of needed expansion. Perhaps most significant of all, his coworkers knew in Vernon a man who sought continually to integrate his personal faith into the routine of daily life.

A MEMORIAL service was held in the First Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana on December 30, 1980 conducted by Pastors Ken Bauman and Curt Claassen. At one point an excerpt from one of Vernon's devotional messages given some months earlier was played from a cassette recording. It was a dramatic moment and experience to hear Vernon's voice addressing the congregation on the topic: "Heaven Our Home."

Irena Sprunger continues to make her home in Berne. Also surviving are sons Charles of Trappe, PA and Wilmer of Berne; daughters Jeannette of Goshen, Indiana and Shirley of Newton, KS. The AIMM family prays for healing of the sorrow of bereavement and for the joy which comes from the memory of a life which was so fully and richly lived for the honor of our Lord.

About the Editorial . . .

Excerpts from a study paper given by Dr. David Bosch in February at a joint meeting of the Mennonite Missionary Study Fellowship and the Council of Mennonite Seminaries. Dr. Bosch is Professor of Theology and Missiology of the University of South Africa in Pretoria.

²⁰M. Linz, "A Theology of Mission in Outline", *Missionschaft und Oekumenik*, 1964 pp. 33-34

²¹Context and Conversion, *International Review of Missions* No. 271 July 1979, p. 308

²²The Church as Witness, *Reformed Review* 35:1, March 1978 p. 9

²³H.W. Gensichen, "Glaube fur die Welt", 1971 pp 80-95

EDITORIAL

The community of believers is the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a leaven in society; and what is striking about salt and light and leaven is that they surrender themselves without reservation, but without ceasing to be what they are! The point at issue here is therefore not the Church's self-affirmation and self-maintenance but its character as servant. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught before anything else, to pray away from ourselves. We pray for the glorification of God's Name, the coming of *his* Kingdom, the manifestation of *his* will. Indeed, we do not only pray away from ourselves but also against ourselves. This is the way in which the Church surrenders herself, to God and the world, as the "community of the dispersed" (Melancthon).

IT IS OF THE UTMOST importance to realize that this self-giving of the Church is not a burden inflicted upon her, not a new law laid on her back. As Lesslie Newbigin puts it, "We have regarded witness as a demand laid upon us instead of seeing it as a gift promised to us. We have made the missionary imperative into a law, a heavy burden laid upon the conscience of Christians, whereas the New Testament sees it as a gracious gift, as - if I may use the phrase - a spinoff from Pentecost . . . There is absolutely nothing in the New Testament corresponding to the almost frantic appeals for missionary activity which have been common in Protestant missionary practice."²¹ Elsewhere, Newbigin says, "the words 'You shall be my witnesses' is not a command to be obeyed but a promise to be trusted."²² This is demonstrated by Paul, who introduces himself to the church in Rome as somebody who, through Christ, has 'received the *privilege* of a commission in his name to lead to faith and obedience men in all nations' (Rom. 1:5).

THE MISSIONARY DIMENSION (of the church) is primary. Unless the Church is missionary by its very nature, it would be preposterous to engage in a missionary encounter with the world. Hans-Werner Genischen lists five criteria for a missionary church. It is a church (1) in which outsiders are welcome and made to feel at home; (2) which is not merely an object of pastoral care with the pastor enjoying the monopoly; (3) whose members are equipped for involvement in society and who are, in fact, actively involved in it; (4) which is structurally supple in order to meet new needs and challenges; and (5) which does not defend the privileges of a select group.²³

THE PROBLEM IS THAT, all too often, the church lacks this vital missionary dimension and yet becomes involved in a missionary enterprise. Such a church erects a colossal "missionary machine" without being in itself missionary. The result is all manner of aberrations. The church imparts its own ghetto mentality to the people it "reaches". It engages, not in mission, but in propaganda, reproducing carbon copies of itself.

ON THE OTHER HAND, when the Church is missionary by its very nature, when it is *in*, yet not *of* the world, when the new fellowship in the Church so astonishes outsiders that they refer to Christians as people "who turn the world upside down" (cf Acts 17:6), when the Church, living on the borderline between the "already" and the "not yet", as "first-fruits of the Spirit", and "pledge of what is to come" (cf Jas. 1:18; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14), lives in this world as harbinger and first fruit of God's Kingdom, it is divinely equipped to be God's agent in his encounter with the world.

Christian Mission - Not a Law but a Privilege (continued from page 1)



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MESSENGER

Volume XLVIII, No. 3 - Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Inc.

SPRING 1981

A MESSENGER —

mes-sen-ger /mes-n-jer/ noun

1. one who bears a message: as (a) forerunner, herald (b) a dispatch bearer in government or military service (c) an employee who carries messages.
2. a light line used in hauling a heavier line (as between ships).
3. a common name for church-related periodicals, the abundance of which may cause some to take them for granted.

Obviously the third definition is not found in the dictionary. Nor should any "Messenger" be taken for granted. Certainly not the **AIMM Messenger!** After all, it doesn't come all that frequently so you do have time to: scan it (at least), read it (as you intend to do, I'm sure), and peruse it (that means 'consider with attention') before the next issue comes.

We don't want the **AIMM Messenger** to be just another periodical. We intend that it be a means of communication because there are some great things to communicate. God is at work! The Great Commission is still intact! And there are many seeking to obey it in today's world. We want you to both receive the dispatch and then respond to the Commissioning King of Kings as He enables.



in this issue —

- page 3 **The Rest of The Commission**
- page 4 **Through the Door (Lesotho)**
- page 6 **Steps of Faith (Lesotho)**
- page 8 **Getting the Word Out (Botswana)**
- page 10 **The Way It Was by Justina Neufeld (Zaire)**
- page 12 **Radiant Emily by Jenny Bertsche (Lesotho)**
- page 14 **Where In the World (the AIMM Team)**
- Back Cover Editorial: Unsung Heroes**

Unless otherwise noted articles, photos, and artwork are written or prepared by AIMM Communications

the cover —

Agnes Khetsi of the village Ha Potsane near Mohale's Hoek in Lesotho. A blind widow, she was born in 1891.

Photo by Bob Gerhart



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THE REST OF THE COMMISSION

"Go ye therefore . . ." The **Go** of missions is dramatic and exciting. But missions is not church sponsored travel for a few or cross-cultural adventures for awhile with interesting program ideas on return.

In fact, the **Go** of the Great Commission is not central. Rather it is Jesus' assumption, simply the setting for His actual command. The main point of His Commission is the instruction "to disciple," not merely to "go."

"Make disciples . . . of people of all nations." He assumes His followers, His commissioned ones, will be among the peoples of all nations because they will be **going**. Of the four verbs of the Great Commission in Matthew 28, three are participles: "having gone" (a more literal rendering than the word 'go'), "baptizing," and "teaching." Only one verb is imperative, the command itself: "disciple."

Missions is the fulfilling of the Great Commission. It is not fulfilled only with the **going**. It is obeyed when **discipling** takes place; not just an advertising of Jesus Christ but an introducing of Him to persons in a way they can respond in faith and trust and following after. This assumes there already was a **going** of the commissioned to where the hearers are among all nations.

Nor is the Great Commission completed when belief and acceptance of God's gift of grace takes place. It moves on to the "baptizing," the identifying of the believing disciples in a public testimony of relationship to the Triune God and resulting also in a new relationship with others so identified. A Church, a body of believers, comes into existence.

Any mission program that stops with proclamation or even individual discipling is failing to complete the rest of the Great Commission. New disciples are to become part of the Body or the planting of the Church.

Mission accomplished? Not quite! There is still a continuing "teaching of all the things" He has taught us. This is a teaching to obey, to give careful attention to, to firmly hold and observe. Whatever Christ has enjoined upon us we are to pass on in nurturing Christian education and training. Mission strategies that do not move on to careful leadership training and Biblical instruction of the "all things" are forgetting the rest of the Commission. And among the "everything" is this Great Commission itself. When the new disciples in turn are discipling, identifying, and teaching "all" to others, only then can one declare: Commission Fulfilled!





Blake Egli, MK in Lesotho village home

Through the Door...

Vicki and Jim Egli working on Sesotho language



Open doors. Doors of opportunity. Doors leading to the new, the unknown.

Missions involves many doors. And both the joys and apprehensions of looking and entering, then going through to the other side.

Jim and Vicki Egli, with their infant son Blake, considered the door of ministry with AIMM. In September 1980 they went through that door and found themselves in the southern African nation of Lesotho. Initial adjustments included finding their way around, obtaining transportation, surviving a variety of minor illnesses, getting acquainted with new colleagues and language study.

Language study! With an assignment relating to African Independent Churches, knowledge of the Sesotho language is necessary though English is the other official language of Lesotho. For most of the Independent Church people English is not spoken, or certainly not fluently since many have not had opportunity to go on to secondary school where English becomes the medium of instruction, not in a country where the high schools only have room for 40% of those completing primary school. All of which means the prospective worker in Independent Church communities needs to grasp and, hopefully, master the tribal language, Sesotho. That's the door!

The door to communicating at first seems barred and locked. But with the first frightening, confusing classes, swimming heads, and uncomprehending ears the process begins. With babbling, then specific sounds, on to "baby talk" and slowly the few words pronounced and remembered, the door begins to open a crack. The first trembling attempts at using the greetings are followed by the setbacks when the response is in words not yet learned. There is the first asking of questions in Sesotho and the bewilderment of not knowing what to say next when they answer or ask a question in return. Then there's the "encouragement" from your instructors that it isn't a hard language; after



Stan Nussbaum and Jim Egli in Bible Class with AIC leaders

all didn't they learn it when still children?

Hours of memorizing, trying to pronounce, practicing those clicks, trying to read and recall. And all of this in the semi-isolation of a tribal language whether you wish to be or not. Colleagues tell you this is the best way. Live out with the people. They wish they could have or would have. It's easy for them to say. You're the one doing it.

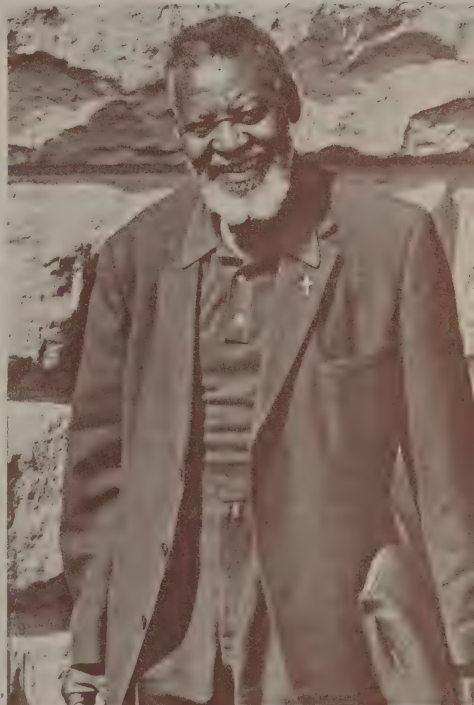
Try to look on the bright side, the compensation for this mental exhaustion. There's the scenery of surrounding mountains, though no time to go up and enjoy them. And the wonder of the southern night sky with far more stars than either in the northern hemisphere or light-polluted cities. Of course the lights of this village won't cancel the beauty of the bright sky, not these gas lamps. Nor will the utility bills be high when there is

no running water or sewer hook-ups to worry about. It was an experience digging the pit for the outhouse, an event only equaled by trying to clean up this 2½ room house, painting ceiling boards that seemed to be more open cracks than solid wood.

But that was the door that stood before, the door to communicating and understanding, the door to ministry and learning, to giving and receiving. And they went through it and are now in the front room of beginning to use what has been learned. There will be more doors for the Eglis, and new rooms to enter and occupy. The same will be true for each one on the AIMM team, though the circumstances and timings may vary.

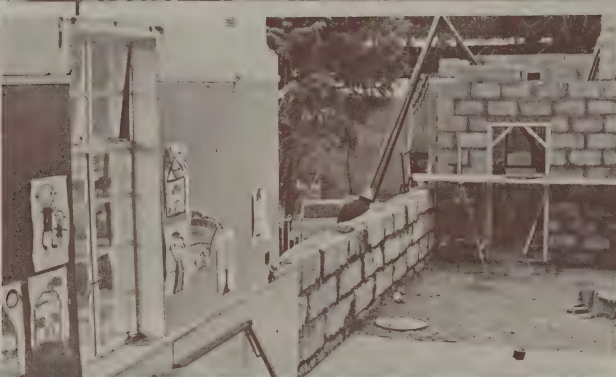
It's not simply facing an open door. It is the going through that counts.

*Independent Church Leader,
Ntate Malebese*





Church Hall completed



*Rebuilding stone wall of Church Hall
Church Hall reconstruction*

Steps of Faith

More than one step of faith was needed. An entire pathway of steps lay ahead. Each one requiring courage and faith. But today it can be reported: Project Accomplished!

Maseru United Church does not have access to denominational budget resources. It is true that many of the expatriate members of this international congregation have adequate salaries, but they are a transient group with short-term involvement in this church. Could they be expected to give to a project they probably would not be around to enjoy after completion? Would it be fair to place a heavy burden of indebtedness on persons

Maseru United Church, Maseru, Lesotho

What a problem! Major repairs to foundations. Need for more space. Opportunity for a Nursery School ministry. A transient congregation. No outside organization underwriting budgets. Rapid inflation adding to costs during delays. This was the situation facing Maseru United Church in Lesotho.

Steps of Faith—a whole series of them—lay ahead of the international congregation where AIMM personnel have provided pastoral leadership since 1974. But could the still small congregation handle such responsibility? Not in their own strength.

Shifting foundations had cracked the stone walls of the Church Hall. The walls had to come down by design before they fell in disaster. Study, prayer and discussion led to a decision to rebuild. The growing Sunday School, a busy child care creche during Sunday services and a new ministry of weekday nursery school prompted the plan to enlarge the Hall at the same time. But how to pay for such costs?



coming to Lesotho in the future? What of the nationals who identified with the church? Their resources were limited to say the least. And the large number of workers already relating to church or mission agencies; how could they be expected to contribute?

But faith prompted a move ahead. And within six months enough funds were in hand to at least start. By May 1980 a miracle began to happen—walls came down and a building actually went up on schedule!

Letters had been written to people who had one time been part of this English language church fellowship and contributions, large and small, trickled in. But mostly it was the sacrificial giving of the small congregation who gave and gave and gave again.

By September 1980 the Church Hall, now 50% longer, was dedicated and by March 1981 the last bills and accounts were paid. Were funds diverted from other ministries? No, for while the Church Hall project was given attention, outreach ministries of United Church also experienced growth and expansion. The little church with a worldwide impact was also demonstrating a generous heart.

SO WE BUILT THE WALL: FOR THE PEOPLE HAD A MIND TO WORK.

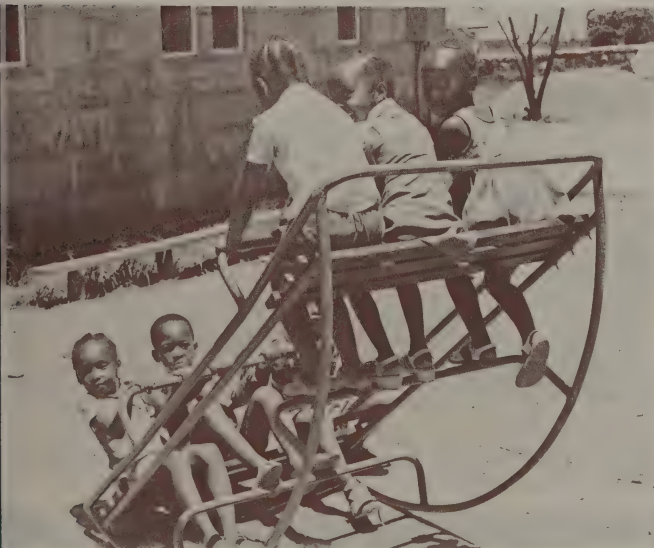
Nehemiah 4:6



Maseru United Church Nursery School pupils

No kindergarten in this country. Lesotho, like many other lands, cannot afford the luxury of adequate preschool preparation. In the capital city of Maseru, which has more than doubled in the past seven years, the need for day care centers and nursery school ministries becomes more obvious. Working mothers are removed from the extended families of the village and children are often neglected. The few privately operated nursery schools in this city of 30,000 are always filled.

In response to these needs, Maseru United Church took over a nursery school that operated privately in their Church Hall for nearly a decade. The congregation saw this as a multi-faceted ministry of teaching, preschool Christian education and nurture, and introducing children to English which is an official language of this nation. An important goal of the operation is to help Lesotho women through on-the-job training to be able to establish and operate day-care centers throughout the Maseru urban area.



Getting The Word Out



"Do you have more Bibles?
Can I buy one, too?"

"Good, you brought Bibles along!
A new Bible of my own!"

AIMM missionaries, Irvin and Lydia Friesen are frequently bombarded with questions and comments like these.

Botswana, like its neighboring areas of southern Africa, has a fairly high literacy rate. Reading ability, while limited, is not the major problem. Often it's the lack of good Christian material to read. Part of this problem is a matter of distribution. The supplies are not readily available to the more remote areas. For some it is simple economics. There is not enough money left to buy what is available.

This is true of the Bible itself. For many the Bible presented an additional problem. It was too difficult to understand. Who can explain these things? Even the leaders had never been taught the Scriptures, certainly not in a way in which they could in turn teach others also.

AIMM's ministries in Botswana are largely centered around the teaching of Bible to African Independent Church leaders so they in turn can teach their people. With the opening of the Scriptures in basic Bible studies, the Scriptures become both clear and attractive. There is a greater interest in reading, studying, and having the Bible for oneself. And though AIMM workers are not primarily book-sellers, the visits to major AIC conventions or gatherings result in prime opportunities for distribution of the Word of God.

Waiting to purchase Bibles in Botswana





Irvin Friesen at an AIC convention



But why sell the Bible? Why not just give it away? For several reasons most have found the principle practiced by the Bible societies to still be the best. It is better to sell the Scriptures at an affordable price than to distribute casually as a free item. The purchased Bible is more highly treasured than one received as a handout.

A specific gift of the Scriptures from one friend to another can have deep meaning and value, but a stranger giving out free books only demeans the recipient and diminishes the value of the books by implying they are cheap. Even the free gift may not appear free in many cultures since a gift received requires the giving of a gift in return. To give Bibles recklessly puts the one we try to help in a difficult bind since he has no way to give in return.

The most important issue is to make God's Word available, the Word written and the Word taught, making it clear and applicable to life. AIMM workers are doing this primarily through teaching, but in order for the student to have access to the Word it may require the sale of the Book of Books, as well.

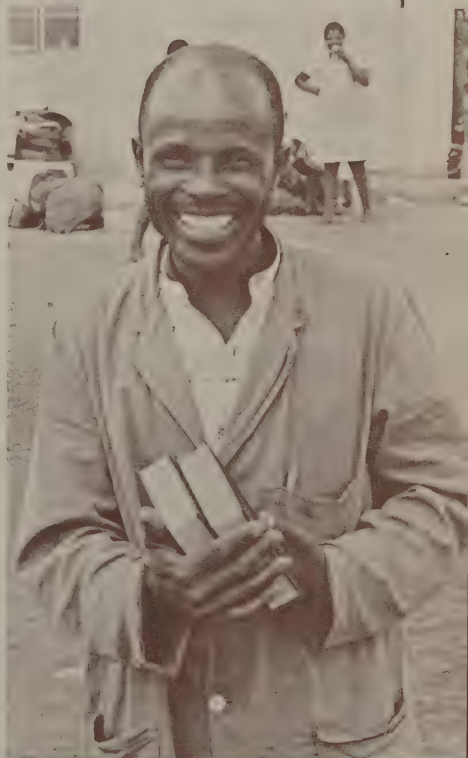
Other avenues to encourage the study of God's Word are open in the country of Botswana. AIMM missionary Ruth Kliever helped plan a workshop for primary school teachers of religious education. Recognizing the teaching of Scriptures as vital, the workshop shared ideas with school personnel on teaching the religious education syllabus recently revised.

A national education leader of Botswana declared that the teaching of Scripture to the children was the wish of both the government and the parents. He stated that teachers who neglect the religious knowledge teaching period "are not good for this Christian country, as religious studies is one subject that molds the character of the child."

It is in a context like this that AIMM assists in getting the Word out to the people and getting the people into the Word.



A Bible of his own!



Each step I take, my Savior gives before me,
 And with His loving hand He leads the way,
 And with each breath, I whisper, I adore Thee
 Oh what joy to walk with Him each day.
 Each step I take, I know that He will guide me,
 To higher ground He ever leads me on
 Until some day the last step will be taken
 Each step I take, just leads me closer home.



THE WAY IT WAS

JUSTINA W. NEUFELD

Justina Neufeld with her husband George went as a missionary to Congo in 1944. Born in Inman, Kansas June 10, 1908, she and her husband had both been teachers in Kansas. Upon their return from the field they worked in the AIMM home office from 1961 to 1970. Justina was hostess and bought goods and packed barrels for missionaries on the field. She later taught school in the Elkhart community. Many readers will recall that George passed away on September 24, 1980. Justina is currently living in Inman, Kansas and is a member of the Bethel Church. She spends many hours creating lovely handcraft projects. Here is her story:

Our years in Congo really began in July 1944 with many lessons in learning patience. Our sailing date was set for July, and then was postponed a month at a time so that we finally left our home in Inman on November 16, 1944. This was during the war so we traveled by Portuguese boats. We arrived in Portugal two weeks later and then waited there nine weeks for passage on to Congo which then took us four more weeks to get to Matadi. A few days later we went to Leopoldville by train. We arrived to find the riverboat filled

and just leaving, so we waited two weeks for the next boat. After one week on the riverboat we came to Basonga where the Roy Yoders met us. We then went to Charlesville for a few days and then on to Nyanga where we spent a week with our sister and brother-in-law, Frank and Agnes Enns. They then took us to Kalamba station which was to be our place of work. We had been on the way two days less than five months, and were truly glad to at last have arrived safely.



Early morning meeting with teachers



It was good to meet the missionaries at Kalamba. The Barkmans were not well and left for America soon after we came. This left two single ladies to carry on the work. We were soon occupied with school, industrial work and language study.

Kalamba was a very small station surrounded by villages so that there was no room for expansion. Some of the natives in these villages were hostile to other tribes, thus keeping people from outlying villages from coming to the station to go to school or to get medical help.

The missionaries had already found another location about ten miles away which was available. Two years after we arrived in Congo, the mission board gave permission to begin work at this new site which we named Mutena. Now we had the great task of clearing acres of forest, jungle, and high grass with axes, hatchets, corn knives, spades and garden rakes. There were no bulldozers! It took three years to get it all cleared and planted in lawn grass. As soon as a plot for building

was cleared we brought brick from torn down buildings at Kalamba in a two-wheel trailer and our Model A in order to put up new buildings at Mutena. Our own 16 x 32 home was the first to be finished.



After moving to Mutena, we immediately began to move the school activities. We set school desks out in the cleared spot under the trees and conducted school in this manner until we could get some buildings put up. These first years at Mutena called for very hard, long days of physical work along with keeping the schools going; but it was very rewarding to see the increase in activities. Every year more and more students came to enroll in

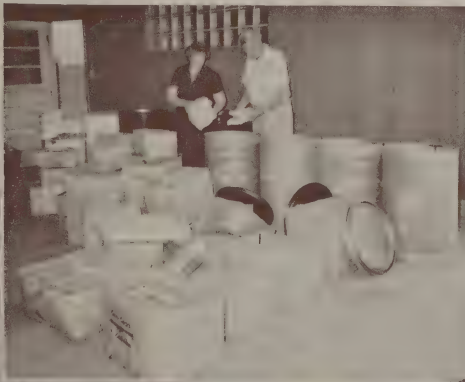
school. The number of patients at the dispensary increased rapidly. We also employed many village men to help with the clearing of the station and the building projects.

Through all these activities we had many opportunities to teach the Word of God. There were worship services every morning in the church, at the medical compound as well as in the classrooms. We also had many outlying villages where an African teacher would conduct services on Sunday and teach the children on weekdays. We visited all these schools at least three times during the school year. During these trips, it was always a joy to sit with the village people in the evening and visit.

As we look back upon our years in Congo, many happy experiences come to mind. There was hard work, blessed fellowship, and the joy of seeing the blessings of God upon the efforts put forth. Our years in Congo were happy ones and we thank God for giving them to us. Truly He has led us each step of the way.

Justina Neufeld

Packing Barrels for Congo (Zaire)



In the school office at Mutena (Zaire)



RADIANT EMILY



Mrs. Samuel A. Mohono

I first met 'Me Emily Mohono when she and her husband Sam Mohono stayed in our Elkhart home. Sam Mohono is a key leader in the African Independent Churches in Lesotho. AIMM missionaries had written to us, "You must meet the Mohono's." We did!

*At village Christmas gathering,
Tabola, Lesotho*



In 1978 Emily walked into our kitchen with a bright Lesotho blanket draped around her shoulders; a large, smiling, radiant woman, exuding warmth to all she met. Even though she was foreign in our country, she seemed to complement Sam in every instance. There were speaking engagements, singing and dancing unto the Lord in Lesotho fashion—and times of rich fellowship with shoes kicked off. It was friends at first sight.

In 1979 it was my turn to travel to Lesotho and visit Emily. On Wednesday, December 19, we arrived at Tabola, the Mohono's village—and what a reunion—complete with outstretched arms, warm embraces and million-dollar grins!

BUT WHO IS EMILY?

Emily was born in South Africa of a Swazi father and Sotho mother. She learned to speak English while working as a cook and a nanny for white folks. In 1949 she met Sam Mohono at a church where he was teaching Sunday School. She says with a grin, "He looked at me and I looked at him and it was love at first sight." They were married in 1951. He worked for the Sunday School Union and then the Bible Society for the next ten years while Emily worked in a Johannesburg hospital. In 1967 the Mohono's moved from Johannesburg to Maseru, Lesotho, where Sam continues with the Bible Society. The cost of living was high in this poor country but Emily could not find work. Determined to be of help to her husband, Emily went back to

Tabola village and began to farm the plot of ground given to them by Sam's father.

First she hired a tractor to plow the ground. Then she planted mealies (corn) and beans. She often took her harvested crop to Johannesburg to sell. With sheer work and determined effort, gradually her farm grew. She now has several fields of mealies and beans. One time she heard on the radio of a one-week course offered in the raising of chickens, so she enrolled. She now has a thriving chicken business on her farm. At peak holiday times, such as Christmas, she often produces around one thousand chickens for marketing. She also knows the heartache of disease and crop failure. Much of what she earns goes into helping Sam with living expenses and into helping the people of Tabola, especially the elderly. She says, "Many people have loved me so much that I must pass it on to others—and so many of these older people have no one who cares for them."

Emily thinks her greatest contribution to Sam's work is her help to the women of the Church Federation. She says, "I teach them how to do things and how to help themselves." But her specialty is working with the older people. On this she says, "They need me and I must help them. It's the Lord's work all around." The Mohono's have two daughters: Susan, a teacher in Johannesburg, and Zandile, a primary school principal who lives close to them in Lesotho, plus several grandchildren.



Emily distributing Christmas gifts to elderly

But back to my visit to Tabola. After Tina, Lorri and I had walked to the rocky site where the people want to build a new AIC church center, and back again to Emily's place, we were hot and thirsty. While the men gathered together for dinner and church business, Emily took us to her personal rondavel (a stone house with a cone-shaped thatched roof). She spread a blanket on the floor, put her meal on a small table by the blanket and told us, "We shall eat here—you are my friends." She served us cornmeal mush ("mealie-pap"), deep fat fried chicken and orange juice. Oh yes, we were served chicken livers which are always given to special guests. Sitting there on that blanket in Emily's rondavel, talking away, it seemed I had always known her. Such a warm and perfect hostess!

My last encounter with Emily was December 23, the Sunday before Christmas. This was Christmas feast and worship day at Tabola, the village church that Sam's father (now deceased) had pastored through the years. These were truly Mohono's people and people of God. Many AIMMs and MCCers working in Lesotho were invited to

the Christmas celebration. The church people greeted us with singing and clapping. They gave us rows of chairs in the shade as it was an outdoor service and the sun was hot. There was lots of speaking, singing, voluntary prayers and clapping for joy. The love of God was evident here. Gifts were presented to honored guests and AIMM was thanked warmly and sincerely for sending Mennonite Christians to help them.

After the worship time came the long awaited Christmas "feast." Emily had butchered a cow for this occasion. The church women of Peka had helped her cook. She served dishes with beef, chicken, rice, red beets, cucumbers, and biscuits with ginger tea. For dessert we had vanilla custard topped with fruit—and then yet another treat—a huge enamel dishpan full of hard candies for all to enjoy. I was overwhelmed by all the organization and by the magnitude of the Christmas feast in this village; but I was still more impressed by the genuine warmth and love manifested to the people. The older people's eyes crinkled with joy as they for once ate to their tummy's content! The smaller children played games,

while the older folk talked, laughed and sang. Some tucked bits of food away in clothing to take home for a hungry tomorrow.

Emily was the center of this Christmas feast day and Sam was obviously proud of her. The older village people loved her for her kindness and generosity to them. They believed in "her Gospel." They knew they could come to her rondavel day or night and she would try to help them if she could. They loved Emily and we loved her. At the close of a beautiful Christmas Day, our group headed back to Maseru—but Emily stayed in her village with her people.

Emily has a dream. She dreams of being able to build a wayside "cafe" (restaurant) along the main road (she pointed us to the exact spot), not far from her rondavel. She would like to offer corn mealies and roasted chicken to travelers. At one end of the building she hopes to create a gift shop featuring Lesotho art: handcrafts, bead work, pottery and wall hangings. She assured me that if the Lord would help her to build "this dream," then she in turn would use the profits to help more and more of her village people in the years to come.

Radiant, loving Emily could do this—and she would!

by Jenny Bertsche
with Joyce Gerhart



Emily Mohono and Jenny Bertsche



WHERE IN THE WORLD...

LANGUAGE STUDY

c/o Bureau Missions Protestantes
1143 Chaussee de Waterloo
1180 Bruxelles, Belgium
- Jim and Cheryl Campbell
- Dennis and Dianne Schmidt

UNDER APPOINTMENT

Anne Garber to
Upper Volta - January 1982

ON STAFF

224 West High Street
Elkhart, IN 46516
- James and Jenny Bertsche
- Art and Martini Janz
- Bob and Joyce Gerhart
- Doreen Ratzlaff

ON FURLOUGH

John and Tina Bohn
c/o Alden Bohn
25517 CR 24
Elkhart, IN 46517

Jim and Jeanette Christensen
6280 Chase
Arvada, CO 80003

Richard and Marilyn Derksen
c/o AIMM
224 West High Street
Elkhart, IN 46516

Levi and Eudene Keidel
c/o Priscilla Miller
4205 Tacoma
Fort Wayne, IN 46807

John and Leona Krause
c/o Mrs. Jacqueline Rempel
32226 Mouat Drive
Clearbrook, British Columbia
CANADA V2T 4H9

Anna V. Liechty
c/o Paul Liechty
265 Buckeye Street
Berne, IN 46711

Arnold and Grace Harder
Rt. 2, Box A-11
Mountain Lake, MN 56159

Rudy and Elvina Martens
2114 Lane Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517

Dennis and Jeanne Rempel
c/o Herman Rempel
P.O. Box 505
Alta Loma, CA 91701

Lodema Short
406 Brussel
Archbold, OH 43502

Henry and Naomi Unruh
c/o Henry Zacharias
32136 Hillcrest Avenue
Clearbrook, British Columbia
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Pray for us that the message
of the Lord may spread rapidly
and be honored ... 2 Thess. 3:1

Discouragement is
an empty mailbox after a hard day!!

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ZAIRE

Mailing address:

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LESOTHO

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- Stan and Lorri Nussbaum

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Maseru 100, Lesotho

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RETIRED MISSIONARIES

Elmer and Esther Dick

Route 2, Box 255A

Mountain Lake, MN 56159

Tina Quiring

209 Ninth Street, Box 105

Mountain Lake, MN 56159

Mabel Sauder

Route 2

Grabill, IN 46741

Fanny Schmallenberger

136 North Maple

Morton, IL 61550

Russell and Helen Schnell

6651 West Alice Avenue, Apt. 15

Glendale, AZ 85302

Merle and Dorothy Schwartz

811 Osage Street

Normal, IL 61761

Lois Slagle

Box 424

Pioneer, OH 43554

Irena Sprunger

665 Hendricks

Berne, IN 46711

Aganetha Friesen Enns

Sp. 102 Hawthorne Acres

310 NE Kings Valley Highway
Dallas, OR 97338

Archie and Irma Graber

Route 2

Stryker, OH 43557

Frieda Guengerich

6650 West Butler Drive, Apt. 6
Glendale, AZ 85302

Justina Neufeld

609 South Walnut, Box 183
Inman, KS 67546

Anna Quiring

209 Ninth Street, Box 105
Mountain Lake, MN 56159

Mary J. Toews

Pleasant View Home
Inman, KS 67546

Selma Unruh

502 South Adams
Hillsboro, KS 67063

Edwin and Irene Weaver

Schowalter Villa, Apt. 5-A
Hesston, KS 67062

EDITORIAL



UNSUNG HEROES

"Guess it's time to go. We'll see you. Goodbye." "Take care. God bless. Bye now." "We'll write. So long . . ." Car doors shut. Out the driveway. Airport gates close. Out of sight. Another departure. Another farewell. Another leaving, a going.

For the missionary it's a going in obedience to the Great Commission. It's a going with purpose, with high motivation. It's a going to share, to see God at work.

But for the parents of the missionary (and the grandparents, too), what about them? They are the forgotten part of the missionary program. In contrast to the missionary they are left with an emptiness that new countries, new cultures, new churches, and new friends will not fill. They will not be getting letters of encouragement. They will not hear others say, "We're praying for you. We're remembering you."

After all the missionary's parents are not going far from home. They are staying. Yes, they are staying to wait for intermittent letters, to miss the growing up of the grandchildren, to wish to share the holidays, and to be separated at those times of special moments.

The missionary's parents are doing more than staying. They are sacrificing; sacrificing those times of togetherness, sacrificing their rights to having family nearby. Instead they are sharing their children with God's people over there, staying and supporting, so their dear ones can be going and giving. They are substituting letters for personal conversation so their children are able to speak the Good News face-to-face with some who have never heard. These are the sending parents, serving, too, in God's global program. These are the unsung heroes of world missions.

To you who are parents of missionaries, we salute you for your sacrificing. We salute you for your patient trusting. We commend you for your persistent praying. We thank you for your giving of those so dear to you. And we remember that it was Jesus who said, "The one sent is not greater than the one who sends. . ."

—RWG



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MESSENGER

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Another Messenger —



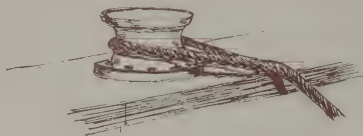
Remember the definitions of the word "messenger" given in our Spring issue of this magazine? The word can be used to describe a light line used in hauling a heavier line as between ships.

Recently we saw such a line in use. Watching freight pass through the locks on the upper Mississippi River, we saw workers securing the barges. To fasten the very heavy lines (ropes, to us landlubbers) around the posts along the edge of the locks, it was necessary to first throw a small light line from the vessel to the shore. This was the "messenger." It could be caught more easily and then used to pull the heavier line of thick rope across the gap. With the vessels securely fastened the water level was changed and the shipping progressed down the steps of the locks with safe delivery of the cargo.

In Africa today changes are underway, as anywhere in our world. Some problems are complex. Many situations are challenging. There are varied needs that demand response. There are numerous events that prompt praise. But understanding can be difficult and unwieldy as large chunks of information are needed, and that across barriers of oceans and continents, cultures and languages.

We hope the **AIMM Messenger** can be a light line, easily grasped, to make possible the tying in of greater perceptions and understanding. The **AIMM Messenger** can't give all there is to know or all that is going on in God's Kingdom work in Africa. But it is an attempt to help you grasp more. Some things are too valuable to let drift by.

—RWG



in this issue —

Page 3 : SERVING—A PRIVILEGE
 PAGE 6 : IMPACT! Zaire Youth Bible Camp
 PAGE 8 : THE WAY IT WAS - Irma Graber
 PAGE 10: DIMUKA ANNA MAZEMBA
 PAGE 13: GOING . . .
 Back Cover: Editorial, OUR MASTER

the cover —

*A Zaire Mennonite teenager from Tshikapa
 Service is not always busyness and rush.
 This girl was waiting to serve.
 Her story begins on page 3. Photo by Bob Gerhart*

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Available to serve

Serving—a Privilege

Slavery and servanthood have a way of becoming confused in our thinking. Our commendable abhorrence of slavery and its attendant evils have spilled over into our attitudes toward any form of servitude. We think in terms of unfair, and involuntary necessities. The servant is always seen as the victim, the loser, in the process of serving. Yet servanthood is one of the "in" words in our churches today. We glibly talk about serving one another and being in a servant stance in relation to our world. Do we truly understand what this implies? Are we expecting to be glorified as heroic servant-martyrs or commended for our great sacrifices while serving? What do we really mean when we speak of the privilege of serving?

Traveling in Zaire brought an experience with servanthood, not as bondage but as privilege. Soon after my arrival in Tshikapa I was taken on a tour of the area to visit several churches. It was a Sunday afternoon, a bit on the warm side. With the Church Vice President, Mukanza Ilunga, and the Treasurer, Tshimowa Bisosa, and other Zairian brothers we jounced along the sandy and rough roads in a pickup truck with a wire screen enclosure on the back. After a drive through a market and a stop at a parish chapel, we went to a simple home and found a group of forty or more radiant young people gathered in the courtyard. They were singing and praying and sharing the promises of Scripture since mid-morning with bereaved relatives of a businessman who had died in a distant village. Those members of the family that couldn't afford or manage to get to the funeral were being comforted by the presence of the youth of the area churches. We listened to their singing for awhile then as we prepared to leave a half dozen of these young people piled into the back of our pickup since we were heading in the direction of their homes.



Singing at home of bereaved, Tshikapa

Along the way we dropped several off here and there until only one lovely young lady was left riding with the pastors and deacons in the back. (She is the young woman on the cover of this issue.)



Roads of sand and ruts in Tshikapa

The day was warmer now and Rev. Mukanza repeated his earlier suggestion that we stop somewhere for a cool soft drink. Inquiring at several little shops and cafes did not produce the soda pop for which we wished. We went into the restaurant of a small hotel and were informed by the waiter that, sorry, there were no soft drinks to be had. There was plenty of cold beer and things stronger but nothing "soft." Weekend business, it turned out, did not justify taking up space in the refrigerator with something so mild as a coke when the demand for beer was so much greater, and more profitable. I would have been content with a warm coke but my hosts felt it was important to serve me something cold. So on we went to see more churches in other areas while stopping periodically at cafes, always to be told the same thing: "Sorry, no cold beverages unless you take the beer." Of that there was plenty.

All this time the beautiful teenager was riding in the back of the truck, bouncing along dusty tracks, long after her friends had returned to their homes. I asked Mukanza about her. "Is she the daughter of one of the pastors accompanying us? Does she live near where we are still going?"

"No," Mukanza explained, "She is just one of the church young people. But she is riding along for a reason. You see, long before the missionaries arrived, we had a custom that whenever we have a visitor, a special guest, we must take time to drink something together before we can talk seriously. After we refresh ourselves and our traveler has had something to drink then we can talk about important matters. But it is also part of this custom to have someone serve us our beverage. This girl traveling along today is here waiting to serve you, to pour your drink, if we can ever find something cold to drink this afternoon."

Mukanza continued his explanation, "Of all the young people we saw this afternoon, she is the one given the privilege to serve us."



A privilege to serve! What did it mean for our companion in the back of the truck? A dusty ride. A wasted afternoon. Waiting and waiting some more. Doing nothing praiseworthy for most of the time. Not being noticed during questions and discussions with parish leaders. Walking to this cafe and that to return empty handed. For for her, service meant being available. Waiting until the right time came. Just being available to do what needs to be done.



Serving Vice President Mukanza and CMZA treasurer, Tshimowa

When we talk about servanthood in our church circles we generally are thinking in terms of volunteering when we feel like it; of being very active so we will have a good feeling of being useful or at least noticed; and of carrying out the praiseworthy (or often "praise-seeking") plans which were probably our own ideas in the first place anyway. We speak of being servants but we still want to be in charge of the serving. Service with much activity and busyness we can accept but service in waiting, just being available, unnoticed, or, heaven forbid, out of sight, is not all that exciting. It's hard to share with others the accomplishments of that kind of serving. Especially if the act we are called on to perform isn't such a great task after all.

We finally did find a hotel of sorts that Zaire afternoon, and we had our cold pop seated around a low table on the patio. The waiter took our order and brought it to us but our "servant girl" served.

What was that so-important job that took her from her afternoon and her friends? Simply pouring the bright red Grenadine soft drink from the bottle into the glass. Earth shaking? No. Tremendously important? Not really. A matter of life and death? Certainly not. But servanthood? Yes. No complaining. No self-pity. No clamor for notice. No news releases. No heroics of suffering. Simply being available for that moment when she could serve. And of all the young people that afternoon she was the most privileged. She had served and the honor was in the serving. The reward was simply in the doing. The joy was in the being available.

Jesus asked, "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But, as for myself, I am as the one who serves." (Luke 22:27)

What a privilege to be available to such a Master!

—Bob Gerhart



impact!

Zaire Youth Bible Camp



"You're giving us bombs" was the evaluation one girl expressed to the speaker. We were leaving a session at the Bible Camp for young people in Zaire. As I walked out, another camper came to express his thanks for letting God make me suggest his name to be included as a camp participant. He found it to be a great time of blessing and help in his own life.

The occasion was a Bible Camp organized for our young people, a first for the CMZA. The camp was held at Nyanga from Thursday afternoon to the following Wednesday morning, April 16 to 22, 1981. Fifty-nine campers came representing 32 of the 33 church districts plus one independent parish. (Unfortunately the representative of the 33rd district had managed to get as far as Mbuji Mayi but missed the plane connections from there.) Of the campers 26 were girls and 33 boys. Some had to walk many miles to get to an airstrip. Others of us travelled by road, six hours in a pickup over rough roads but with singing most of the way.

Through the day "How to" subjects such as "How to prepare a Bible study," "How to conduct a Bible study" as well as actual Bible studies were presented. With "Victorious Faith" as the major theme, special sub-themes as "How to acquire true faith," "Faith, works, and grace," and "Growth in faith" were included. This combination provided leadership training for the young people along with opportunity for personal spiritual growth.



Youth Bible Camp Discussion Group



The camp was organized by the Evangelism and Christian Education departments of CMZA. A team of three from the *Ligue Pour La Lecture de la Bible* (Bible Meditation League) shared as speakers. One ministry of the League is to conduct Bible Camps and we profited much from their experience.

Each day began with a time for meditation. At first we all met together for this hour, then through the week in progressively smaller groups. The final two mornings this hour was given to individual meditation followed by a time of sharing together.

One hour was given to a brief summary of Mennonite history and doctrine. Appreciation was expressed for this session as many wonder what it means to be a Mennonite. Another hour the young people were asked to share their feelings about what they would like to see the church do, how they want to be incorporated, and how the church can best help them to be the church. In response they requested more experiences such as the Bible camp or seminars, one Sunday in the church calendar to be designated a Youth Sunday, help in obtaining lessons and study materials, and a letter of encouragement sent to them regularly.



Bible Campers at Nyanga

Many of the campers thanked us for organizing the camp. We pass this thanks and gratitude on to all of you who made it possible for us to do so.

Testimonies from campers throughout the week indicated that God was at work. Many campers sought personal counsel from staff members. In a small group meeting, while discussing what kind of faith each of us had, one girl admitted she didn't have faith. That evening, however, she gave her life to God during the prayer time in the group. The following day, when asked if she had faith, her reply was an immediate and joyful, "yes!"

Another girl said she found the "How to" sessions very helpful. As the oldest child in the family she is responsible to lead their family devotions in the home. What she was learning would help her to do a better job. One of the fellows said, "I thank God He made me a new man during this camp." Another said, "Here I decided that Jesus is my only protector. I discovered that God is alive. I believed on Him with doubts before."

Camp Staff ready to travel



A young man confessed, "I preached and gave but I wasn't practicing my Christian faith." Another testified, "I didn't believe that God existed, but in what I learned here I found Christ as my Saviour."

Pastor Mukanza, Vice President of the CMZA, was present for several days since the Evangelism Commission, of which he is chairman, was involved in this project. His contribution to the camp was significant and appreciated. It was good for the young people to have this exposure to one of the top leaders in the church. One of the teachers from the Bible Meditation League commented, "I am impressed with the fact that the Vice President was with us several days; usually legal representatives and pastors give permission for others to go ahead with such projects but aren't really interested in being involved themselves. Here is a top official who was involved."

A faithful kitchen staff made sure all were well fed. The accomplishment of such a project requires many members of the body of Christ working together. This includes, in addition to cooks and counselors and pilots, those who pray and give finances. Expenses, especially for transportation from outlying areas, runs high. The Zaire church even designated the first Sunday of June for a special offering to defray expenses remaining.

For all that God did, we say, "Praise Him!" Now an important task is to uphold these young people, praying that what was begun during these days of Bible Camp will grow and bear much fruit. Will you accept the challenge and pray with us?

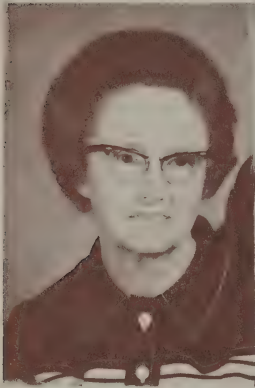
—Leona Schrag, Kalonda, Zaire



**Leona Schrag working with
CMZA Christian Education Department**



Irma Beitler Graber was born on January 5, 1916 in Celina, Ohio. She was commissioned to missions in April, 1948 by the EMC Church of Berne, Indiana. She arrived in the Belgian Congo in November of 1949. She has one daughter, Nancy Ruth, who teaches school in Pettisville, Ohio. Irma came back from the mission field at the time of her husband Archie's retirement. She has kept very active and busy in the Lord's work since then. Here is her own story:



Irma Graber

THE WAY IT WAS

My arrival in Belgian Congo, in one way, marked the fulfillment, the high point of a lot that God had been doing in my life. In another sense it was just the beginning of a really wonderful experience.

I did not grow up in a Christian home and only as a teenager did I have opportunity to accept Christ. My mother died when I was 13 and I escaped going to an orphanage along with my brothers because an uncle and aunt were willing to give me a home and take me to church.

As a high school student I attended a youth conference and was challenged to commit my life to Christ for some sort of service. Because I have always sensed God's interest in me as an individual, this conviction of indebtedness has overshadowed and motivated my decisions.

Opportunity arose and I went to work as a Sunday School and children's worker in our EMC Home Missions program in Tennessee for about six years.

Ministry as Nurse; with husband, Archie, and daughter, Nancy; Dispensary Team.



Wedding Bells

Dear Messenger Readers:

When one attempts to write news from Charlesville for the month of April one big event quickly stands out above all others. It is the wedding days for Rev. Archie Graber and Miss Irma Beitler. Yes wedding days is correct, for in Congo there must be two ceremonies—a civil one by the government official and a religious one before the church.

In our services at my home church at Berne, Indiana, I often heard the Mosers and the Barkmans tell of their work in Congo and stress the need for more missionaries. In one particular service the Mosers told of the desperate need for medical personnel. I told the Lord that I was willing but what could I do? I had only a high school education. But the nagging urge persisted, that I could do something if I was willing to move out by faith.

Preparation began by entrance into a three-year nursing program. Upon graduation, I was employed by my nursing school hospital. This period gave me experience, and was a means also to pay back a school debt. Following that I went to Belgium where I studied French and tropical medicine. My first year and a half at Charlesville in the Congo was just a continuation of my learning: another language, bush medical work and African customs. The kindness of my senior colleagues helped immeasurably. My learning even included a certain Archie Graber. After our marriage in 1951 I began a medical work at Kalonda and assisted Archie in the opening of this new station. For a time we were the only missionaries there.

Probably one of the hardest things about being a lone missionary nurse without a doctor was the lack of consultation on difficult cases. Decisions are serious and hard to make. Is this case bad enough to warrant long hours of travel over rough roads to a doctor? Or do I, with God's help, risk treatment with what I know and what I have on hand? There are also many joys and compensations.

at Charlesville

The African pastors, Rev. Enns, Rev. Sprunger and the groom all wore a white rose on their coat lapel. The bridesmaid was attired in a grey-blue street length dress and a wore a corsage of a white gladiola and red canna. The bride was beautiful in a street length dress of aqua with matching jacket and a tiny white wool hat with veil. The bride carried a white Bible with white roses and white satin ribbon.

The menu consisted of fried chicken, gravy, browned potatoes, carrots and peas, pear salad, pickles, celery cabbage, rolls, butter and jam, pink ice cream and coffee.

As the bride and groom were ready to take off for their honeymoon at Lake Mukamba of the Presbyterian Mission the new Chevy refused to run. Archie had tied the hood down on the inside with wire anticipating some pranks from the younger set in the CIM. But somehow they succeeded in opening the car, pulled the spark plug wires and tied the hood back down again.

Left: Excerpts from a two page Messenger article of 30 years ago by Ina Rocke

A small girl that I remember as Kahinga was carried by her family to our outpatient dispensary at Kalonda. She was very ill, emaciated and coughing. All symptoms pointed to an advanced case of TB complicated by intestinal parasites and malaria. We did what we could with what we had, both with drugs and nutrition. But it looked pretty hopeless.

One evening I remember feeling I just had to make rounds at the wards and talk to this child. As best I could, I told her about Jesus and she said she wanted to accept Him. A major miracle happened, and she slowly, slowly began to show improvement. She stayed for months and received food and medicines. Finally the family felt that they had to return to their home village for it was planting time. What would happen to Kahinga now?

Several months later I answered a Congo knock (a cough) at the door. Here stood a smiling Kahinga with a scrawny African chicken in her arms. She had returned to say "Thank-you."

From 1960 to 1969 I served in a variety of ways outside of nursing. One year Nancy and I remained in the States so that Archie could return to Congo to do refugee work in Kasai. I then spent a year and a half caring for MK's at our CIM hostel in the capital city. Later we lived at Mbuji Mayi and at Kikwit where Archie was engaged in refugee work. Mostly I served as chief cook and housekeeper for Paxmen and CPRA staff.

Since retirement, I have worked part-time as a charge nurse at our local nursing home. I also find involvement in our church a joy and challenge. I teach an adult Sunday School class, participate in a ladies Bible study and currently hold an office in our EMC Ladies Auxiliary. I relax by helping Archie finish a piece of furniture he has made or refinishing an old piece we like. Last year I learned to recane chairs.

One of the highlights of our years of service was the year we spent living in the village in Africa, while the administrative buildings were being built at Tshikapa. It was an added privilege to get to know our Zairian church leadership, to know in a measure their struggles and problems and to dream, plan and work with them for the future of our church in Zaire.

—Irma Graber

Graber's first home at Kalonda



Starting on a 7 day journey



Dimuka Anna Mazemba

la femme du Président

"People have embraced me with their love. . ."

Dimuka Anna Mazemba commented with conviction how the North American Mennonite community had honored and "embraced" her and her husband, the Rev. Mbonza Kikunga, newly-elected President of the Zaire Mennonite Church (CMZA).

During their itineration of June and July they met with many members of the AIMM constituency. "We have been honored and welcomed with open arms," Pastor Mbonza said. "This has been a good experience for us to meet so many of our brothers and sisters."

Dimuka spoke in many of the services and to several hundred women in a number of settings. She was featured at the Ladies' Session of the Annual EMC Conference in Steinbach, Manitoba on July 4. Sue Barkman describes that occasion: "Sitting high in the balcony I could observe just about everything—including the interested reactions Dimuka evoked when she and Martini Janz came to the podium. Martini was traveling with her to help fill the gaps in communication, translating from Gipeinde and French to English and Plattendeutsche."

"People seemed interested to hear what a Christian woman from Africa would have to say. Dimuka gave a bit of background on herself as well as a warm testimony to her practical faith in Christ."

Sue continues, "There was such obvious rapport between Martini and Dimuka when they started to speak 'en duet' that there was nothing lost in the translation. They seemed to be of one mind. The joy that came through could hardly be lost anyway."

"Dimuka shared some of the apprehension she felt when she realized she would have to travel alone to New York to meet her husband. Dimuka worried about how she would know Mrs. Otto, the lady who was to meet her there. So upon boarding the Air Zaire jet in Kinshasa, she told the Lord, 'I'm going to Brussels, Lord, and I expect You to meet me there . . .!'"

"Dimuka shared about her life as a Christian wife and mother. She gave valuable suggestions of family devotions, enjoying life as a minister's wife and coping in general."

"Dimuka Anna made an impression on us all. I know I speak for hundreds of others who feel we have learned a lot, or rather 'absorbed' a lot, from her presence among us," Mrs. Barkman concluded.



Dimuka Anna with her husband, President Mbonza.

Dimuka Anna found herself placed in a new role in 1980 as her husband was elected President of the 40,000 member Zaire Mennonite Church relating to AIMM. Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission made possible a three-month study course in English for President Mbonza at the International Language School in Vermont. It was at the conclusion of this study program that the AIMM Women's Auxiliary provided a Fraternal Visit for Dimuka Anna to travel with her husband from June 3 to July 15. As the wife of the President of a growing Zairian church she will have many responsibilities and concerns. Her visit in North America was designed to both help her understand more of the partnership their church has with brothers and sisters across the sea, as well as helping the North American community to be able to support more personally in prayer and encouragement these who are in roles of leadership in today's church.

At the EMC Conference in Steinbach, July 1981





Zaire village

Dimuka Anna was born April 27, 1947 at Nyanga Mission Station in the western Kasai. Her father was Mazemba Pierre, better known as Sh'a Pulu, father of Pulu. He was Pastor of Nyanga station at that time. He is still living and is oldest Pastor in the CMZA. There were twelve children in the family with eight surviving. Dimuka was the youngest of these eight.

Dimuka feels it was a privilege to grow up in a Pastor's home. Her father taught her to pray. Before she went to school she knew many Christian songs and Bible verses by memory. She remembers her father reading the Bible to her phrase by phrase, while she looked on and repeated the phrases after him. Pastor Mazemba had been taught and helped much by the Frank Enns family, then missionaries at Nyanga. Mazemba had access to some school books and taught his children to read, especially spending time with Dimuka, his youngest child.

After Primary School Dimuka lived in the Girl's Compound while she finished 1st and 2nd C.O. (Junior High). Dimuka's mother did not know how to read, but had Dimuka read the Bible to her. Her mother, Lombe Marta, took her along to read the Bible aloud when Lombe spoke at the maternity ward, or at mournings, or at the women's meetings at church. Dimuka says her mother often sent her to the villages with gifts to help those in need.

As Dimuka read the Bible for herself, she felt a longing to know God personally in her own life. When she was eleven years old she wanted so much to take part in the Lord's Supper. She was told only "Believers" can take part. At that time she entered Catechism class where John 3:36 was the verse that really caused her to believe. She was later baptized into the Church.

Dimuka's husband, Pastor Mbonza, remembers when Pastor Mazemba first came to Kipoko village with little Dimuka for special holidays. Kipoko is the village of Mbonza's people with Mazemba's relatives living in an adjacent village. At this time (Mbonza told her later) he thought she was such a cute little girl, dressed so nicely in a new dress, topped with a bright red scarf, and so well behaved at the holiday festivities.

Later when Dimuka was in grade school at Nyanga, and Mbonza in high school, he would call her and her cousins and offer them food. She wondered why? Also about this time some of the elders of Mbonza's village would catch her by the arm and say to her, "You are going to be the wife of our son." Dimuka admits that this all went above her head.

When she was sixteen, Mbonza sent her a note which said in effect, "Will you be my wife?" She didn't answer it since it was beyond her to reply. During these years Mbonza spent many hours sitting with her father, talking to the older Pastor about the affairs of God. Dimuka was working in the kitchen in back of their house, or going to get water, or in the fields and often did not see him. In the summer of 1965 when Dimuka was eighteen, Mbonza wrote to her again concerning marriage. This time she went to her father with the letter. Her father said to her, "This man is a real Christian. He'll make a good husband and take good care of you." Dimuka wrote to Mbonza, "Go to my father for your answer."

Dimuka and her children welcoming President Mbonza home



By this time Mbonza was a teacher and also president of the local Youth For Christ group. Dimuka recalls how Mbonza helped her with the Bible verses during these meetings, which deepened her faith.

In December of 1965 Mbonza went to Dimuka's parents to ask for her in marriage. They accepted on behalf of their daughter. Then her parents and his parents shared a drink together as a symbol of the public engagement. After this Mbonza left to study Theology at the University of Kananga and Dimuka went to the nurses school at Kajiji. A year later Mbonza returned from the University and delivered the wedding dowery or "the riches" which included six Zaires of money (\$12.00), cloth for her mother, a suit and shoes for her father, a case of pop, and tea and sugar. The affair of the "marriage riches" was finished.



Mbonza went back to University but Dimuka did not return to nursing school. She stayed home for a year while her mother trained her in the arts of being a good wife and mother.

On July 31, 1968 Mbonza and Dimuka were united in marriage on Nyanga station. After this they spent three more years at the University of Kisangani where Mbonza studied in the Theological department and Dimuka took Bible and Home Economics.

In 1973 Mbonza was ordained as a Pastor. The next four years were spent in chaplaincy work at the large Protestant hospital at Tshikaji. 1977 saw them move to Njoko Punda where Mbonza became coordinator of all Protestant schools of the area.

Then in March 1980 Mbonza was elected President of the CMZA Churches. During all these moves Dimuka was busy caring for her household which had grown to include six children, as well as helping out in the Church in whatever way she could. Now she found herself in a new role as "*la femme du President*" - the wife of the President.



Of her new responsibilities Dimuka says, "My work is to pray for my husband, that God will give him wisdom to help the church. And it is to raise my six children to know and honor God. My oldest three already know how to lead in family devotions. Also my ministry is to greet and entertain guests of the CMZA church, and there are many, as our home is located right beside the Church Administration building; the people are either waiting at the office or at our home."

Dimuka continues, "My work is to help the women of the Church in all areas, to encourage them whenever opportunity arises. Some want to give me a 'role' or a 'title'; I say No! Others can have titles. I will just help and be supportive in the home and in the Church. I will especially try to encourage younger women to get involved in the work of the Church. It's this kind of work I was encouraged to do as a young girl.

"My childhood prayer was, 'God, help me to grow up to do Your work.' And He has!"

Dimuka is a living demonstration of the results of the remarkable relationship between a Christian father and his daughter, and between a Christian wife and her husband.

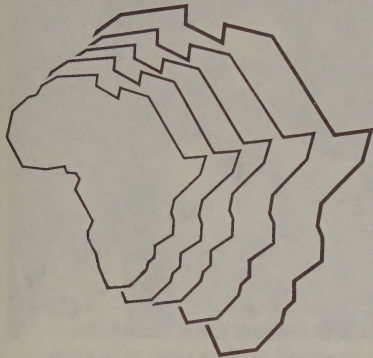
God bless you, Dimuka Anna, as you return to Zaire to continue fulfilling your childhood prayer!

— Jenny Bertsche with Ina Rocke and Sue Barkman



GOING . . .

GOING OUT . . .



JONATHAN AND MARY KAY LARSON left July 19 for Gaborone, Botswana. While assignment details will continue to develop in coming months, the Larsons initially will study Setswana, the local language, and become familiar with the African Independent Churches with whom they will work in Bible teaching ministries. Jonathan will also be working with Radio Botswana religious programming during the absence of Henry Unrau, currently on North American assignment.

The Larsons have two children, Karin and Jennifer. Both Jonathan and Mary Kay grew up as MKs ("missionary kids") in India where they first met at boarding school. Jonathan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dana Larson, have been missionaries with the Baptist General Conference, and are now located in Argentina. Mary Kay's parents are Edward and Ramoth Burkhalter, long time missionaries in India from the First Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana.

Finally, brothers, be praying for us that the Word of the Lord might be spreading rapidly and be glorified . . .

II Thessalonians 3:1



GAIL WIEBE leaves for France September 7 to continue her studies of the French language. Early next year she will move on to Upper Volta to become part of an AIMM linguistics team with Anne Garber. Gail has spent three semesters with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and earlier had experience teaching fifth and sixth grades at the Hopi Mission School in Oraibi, Arizona.

Gail is the daughter of Wilbert and Dorothy Wiebe of Whitewater, Kansas.



JAMES AND CHERYL CAMPBELL will be commissioned August 23 by the Mennonite Fellowship of East Lansing, Michigan in anticipation of their September departure for African service. After a year of language study in Belgium, the Campbells will move to Nyanga, Zaire to work with agricultural ministries with SEDA. Jim's training is in crop and soil science while Cheryl has studied animal husbandry.

Jim is originally from Walnut Creek, California, the son of Mrs. Jean Campbell. Cheryl hails from New Haven, M where her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Earl LeRoy still live.



LOREN AND DONNA ENTZ returned to Upper Volta, West Africa, June 27 for a second term of service. they are involved in church planting based in Orodara in the western part of the country. During their North American Assignment the Entzs were enrolled in the Overseas Mission Training Center in Elkhart where they studied methods of ministering to Islamic peoples under the direction of Professor Roelf Kuitse.

Loren is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Entz of Elbing, Kansas and Donna comes from Fiske, Saskatchewan, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kampen. The Entzes began their work in Upper Volta in October 1978.



JOHN AND TINA BOHN return to Lesotho in southern Africa in August for a second term. Their assignment will take on new dimensions as they seek to relate to the African Independent Churches through rural and community development. They will work with an association of nearly two dozen AIC denominations, the Federal Council of African Spiritual Churches, with the task of discovering the most practical and helpful ways simple and appropriate methods can be encouraged in this agriculturally poor mountainous country. They bring to their work the experience gained in previous service in Europe, Zaire and Papua New Guinea.

John's parents, Rev. and Mrs. Ernest Bohn, live at Goshen, Indiana. Tina's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Warkentin, are at home in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.



JOHN AND LEONA KRAUSE resume their duties at the AIMM hostel for missionary children in Kinshasa, Zaire after a brief furlough in North America. Responsibilities include those of parenting the missionary children as well as the operation and maintenance of the hostel facilities. They return to Africa August 16.

The Krause's home church is Olivet Mennonite in Clearbrook, British Columbia. John's parents are John and Anna Krause. Leona is the daughter of Anna and the late Issak Bergen.

John and Leona leave all their children in North America this term. In 1979 they took their youngest daughter, Pamela, along. Pam graduated from The American School of Kinshasa (TASOK) in June and will remain in Canada for further studies.

ARNOLD AND GRACE HARDER return to Zaire August 21 after a short furlough to resume agricultural work in the Nyanga area. Arnold has been working with SEDA, Service for Development of Agriculture, a program of the Mennonite Church in Zaire. The Harder's older daughters, Karis and Christine will resume their studies in Kinshasa, living in the AIMM hostel there. Matthew and Marcy will accompany their parents "up-country" to Nyanga.

Arnold and Grace are both from the Mountain Lake, Minnesota community where their prents, Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Harder and Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Hiebner are living.



GOING BACK OUT . . .

Five of our workers are returning to Africa, though in new roles and assignments, after several years away from this important part of the world.



FREMONT AND SARAH REGIER

spent eight years in Zaire before returning to North America in 1976 for study and a variety of ministries. Now they have returned to Africa again, but not to Zaire. Instead they have gone to the southern country of Botswana where they will assume coordinating responsibilities. Both will relate to the Independent Church contacts that AIMM has developed over the past six years. In 1982 Fremont will take over the newly created joint-administrative position of Mennonite Ministries of Botswana, a function which will relate to both AIMM and MCC work in the country. The Regier's youngest son, Nathan, is joining them in this venture. He will attend the local international high school in Gaborone, the capital city where the Regiers will be located.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Regier of Whitewater, Kansas, Fremont first went to Zaire as a Paxman in 1955. Sarah joined him after marriage for term of service in Mexico. She is from the Elbing, Kansas, community, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Janzen.

The Regiers arrived in Botswana July 24 for their new assignment.



RICHARD AND JEAN HIRSCHLER

are returning to Zaire after a six-year absence. They served in Kalonda relating to the medical work of the hospital there from 1972 to 1975. Since then Dr. Hirschler also worked at the Mennonite Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan from 1977 to 1979. They have agreed to return to Zaire in August to assist in the establishing of a public health ministry, with an emphasis on preventative health care, in cooperation with the Medical Commission of CMZA. They will be working from Kalonda near Tshikapa in Zaire.

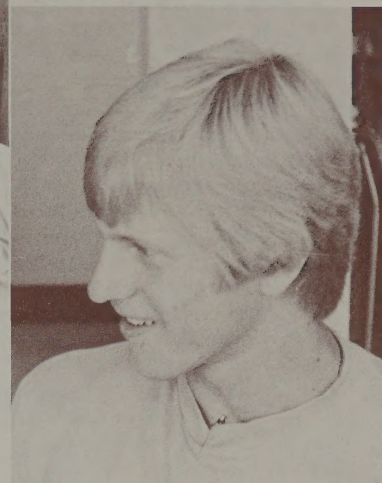
Richard is from the Beatrice, Nebraska community, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hirschler. Jean is from Elkhart, Indiana. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Alan Simpson. Richard and Jean will be accompanied by their three children, Karis, Andre, and Lenora.

PHASE TWO . . .



DENNIS AND DIANNE SCHMIDT

have completed a year of French language study in Belgium and left August 5 for their assignment in Zaire. They now begin the study of Tshiluba as they relate to the Zaire church community.



CHARLES BULLER returns to his "home country," Zaire, the land of his birth. He grew up as an MK, the son of AIMM missionaries, Peter and Gladys Buller. He returns to Africa now as an OMV, an Overseas Mission Volunteer. He will be working in youth ministries with the Zaire Mennonite Churches located in the city of Kinshasa, a city of three million. He will also teach some English classes. Charles is fluent in both French and Lingala.

Charles was commissioned in the Silver Street Mennonite Church east of Goshen, Indiana on August 16. He is a member of the Kalina Mennonite parish in Kinshasa.



OMISSION . . .

In the Spring 1981 issue of the Messenger the address list for Retired Missionaries omitted:

Glen & Ina Rocke
Route 1, Box 168
Peking, IL 61554

EDITORIAL

OUR MASTER

A Master! What an undemocratic concept! In a desire for an egalitarian society the idea of masters and servants is repugnant.

But Jesus Christ is called both Master and Lord. Perhaps the "Lord" part is more popular because we don't have such negative connotations about it. Lords and Ladies are an admirable feature of a system foreign to our continent. It is a leftover of past days of pomp and royalty, or of castles and fairy tales. "Master" has a less favorable taste to many of us. "Masters" are what servants and slaves have. "Masters" are contrary to "equality for all." Certainly Lords, too, have a superiority but at least they have rank and class. But Masters seem to have their control because of strength or power or even cruelty.

We tend to bring the same latent thoughts to our Christian living and commitments. Yes, we will declare Jesus to be "Lord," though I fear we are using the term with little understanding. It becomes only a religious appellation, part of the cluster of titles we give our Saviour. The absolute control of His sovereign Lordship gives way to our demand to argue, cajole and convince Him of the wisdom of our own plans. We, too, often join Peter in his contradiction of terms, "Not so, Lord."

When it comes to Jesus as "Master," we react with apprehension. A Master tells the servants what to do, when and how to do it, and need not even give a reason for the command. We want more information than that. We need good reasons (reasons we agree with) before we decide whether or not to carry out the Master's wishes.

For many Christians, Jesus as Master is especially frightening when it comes to Missions. Here He may prove to be not only a Master but a hard taskmaster as well. He may take advantage of our surrender to Him and, as we seem to expect of a master, will send us where we don't want to go; ask of us what we don't want to do; demand of us what we can't really handle; and certainly deprive us of any joy or satisfaction in it all. How wrong we can be!

Jesus is Lord and Master. He has the right to command and He does. We are not asked to either approve or veto His message, scheduling, or methods. We are only asked to obey. But how important to also learn that "Master" and "cruelty" need not be equated. Ours is a loving Master, a Master who not only washes the feet of His inferiors but lays down His life for them. Yes, He is a Master who commissions and sends. But He also accompanies and equips. And He doesn't mind if we enjoy the assignment or the place to which we are sent.

To serve such a Master is not only a privilege; it is also a joy!

— RWG

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